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Issue 2

FOR MEN

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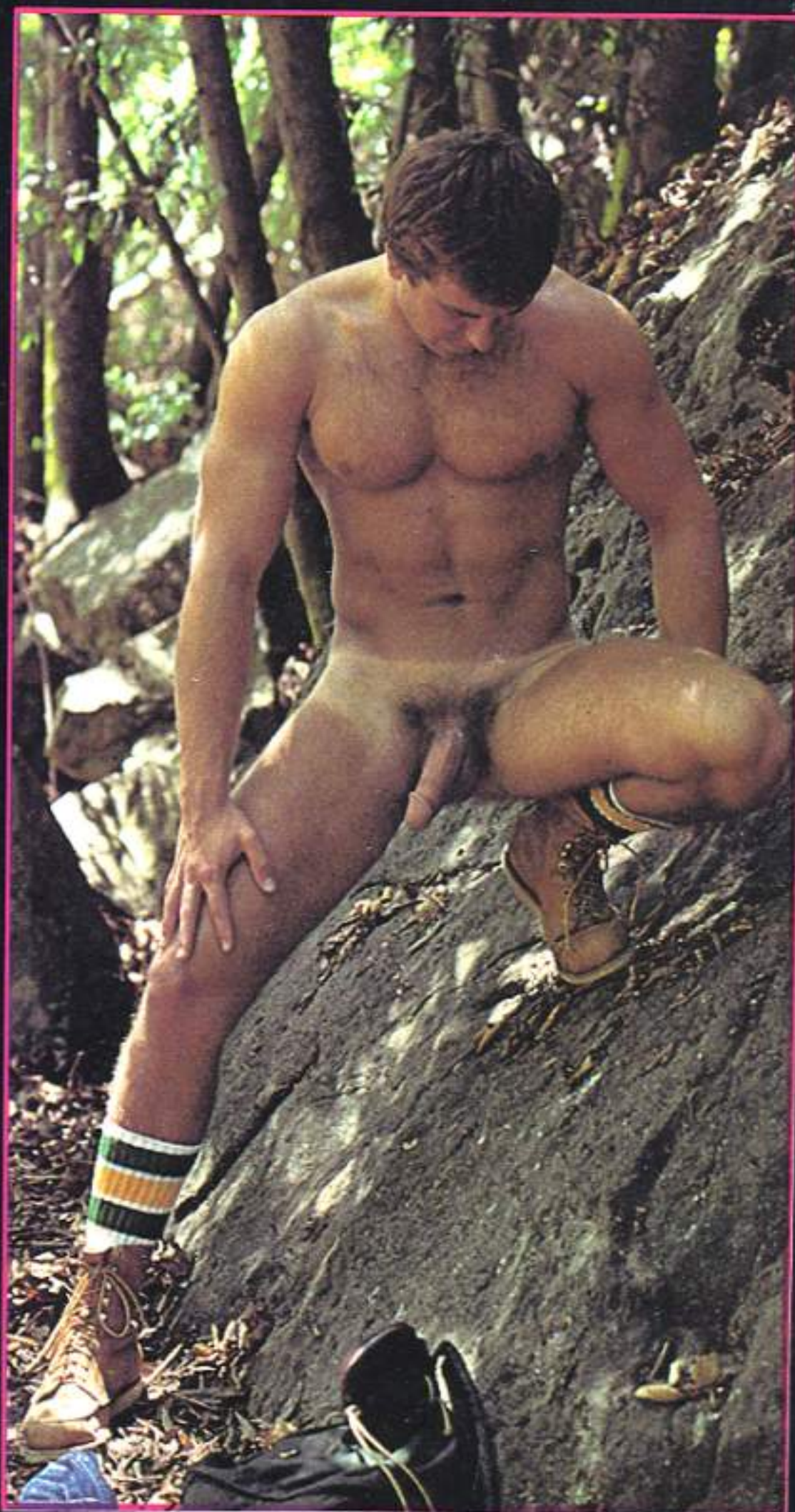
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IN TOUCH FOR MEN

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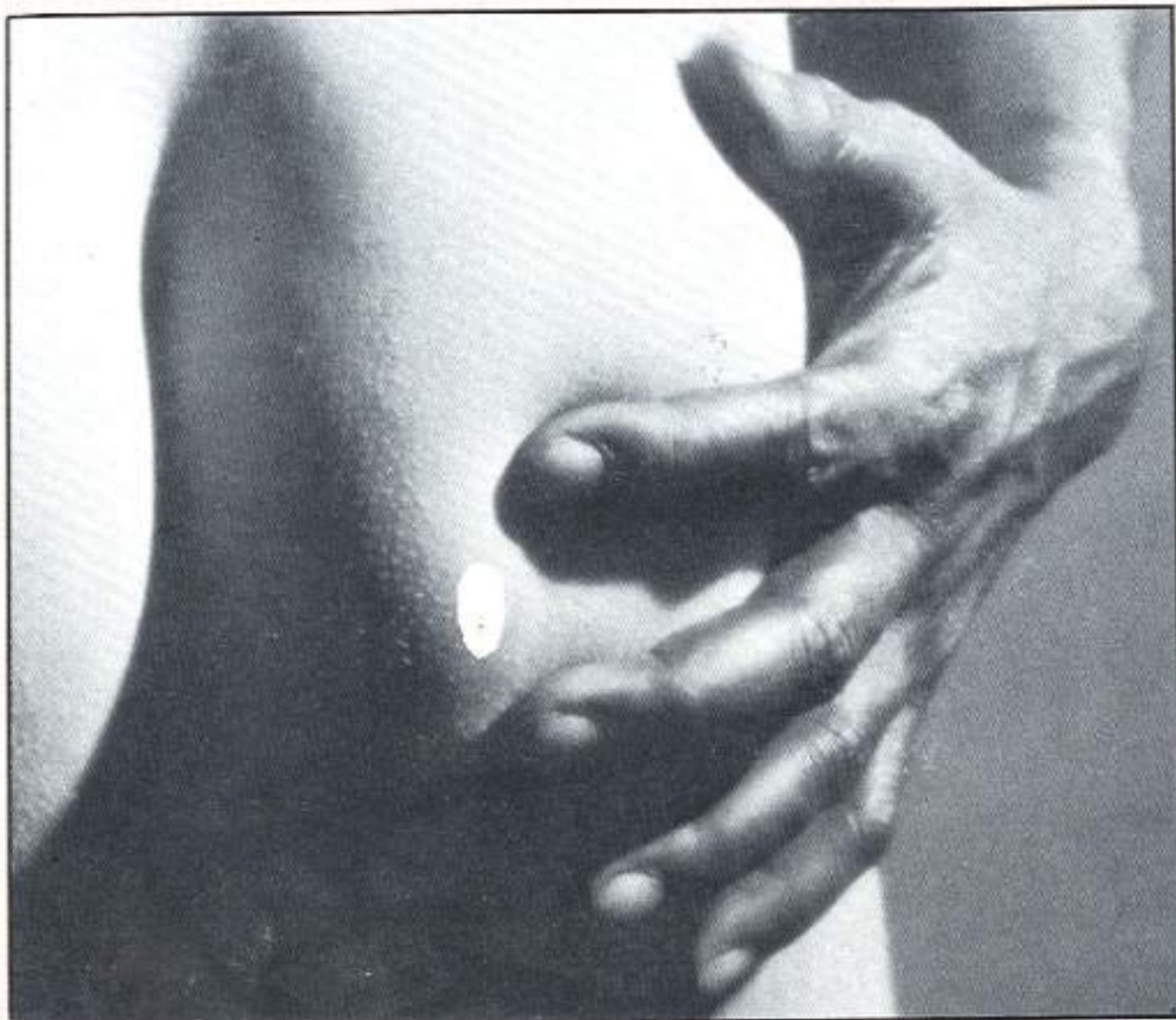


Photo by James Williams

Happy New Year! May it bring you 365 days closer to your goals, whatever they may be.

Our goals are to make every issue of **IN TOUCH** better than the last, and to provide you with the very best in reading (and viewing) pleasure. The slight increase in our cover price — which undoubtedly you noticed — will help us to achieve these goals. (We might point out that we're holding the line on our subscription rates at least until the next issue. So if you aren't already a subscriber — or you have a friend who's been thinking about subscribing — we urge you, or him, to take advantage of the savings over a new cover price. And don't forget, subscribers receive their copy as much as two weeks in advance of newsstand sales.)

New Year's is also a time to make resolutions, and we'd like to make one relative to our striving for continuing growth. For too many businesses (including, alas, some publications), it often seems that growth is paralleled by a loss of contact

with the very people who made the growth possible. We resolve never to lose sight of the fact that *you* are responsible for our success, and that **IN TOUCH** will continue to grow *with* you rather than away from you. That's why your comments, suggestions, ideas, and constructive criticism are so important to us. The best way for us to know how we're doing is for you to tell us.

In this issue, you'll meet some old friends, and hopefully, make some new ones. There are articles on Steve McQueen, Don Ameche, New Orleans; tips on keeping your body in shape and on keeping a relationship alive; fiction; reviews; what's going on around the gay world; our usual three great nude models; and more. (Among the "more" is an objective article on drugs — a subject we stated in our last editorial that is generally taboo for us. However, we felt this particular article is important enough to warrant an exception.)

So read, enjoy, subscribe, and write. But, particularly, enjoy....

editorial

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MOVIES

MUSIC

NIGHTLIFE

BOOKS

Julia is one of those ever-so-tasteful, awfully well-made, as-high-minded-as-all-get-out kind of movies that you feel just terrible for not liking. Significance is engraved on every frame.

You could hardly expect anything else. Director Fred Zinnemann (*From Here to Eternity*, *A Man for All Seasons*) got together Jane Fonda, Vanessa Redgrave, Jason Robards, Hal Holbrook, and Rosemary Murphy (not a giddy bunch) and cast them in a fragment from Lillian Hellman's autobiographical *Pentimento*, published in 1974.

Jane Fonda, anticipating Balenciaga by several decades, plays Lillian Hellman as though she were constantly swathed in sable.

One of Ms. Hellman's omnipresent cigarettes smoldering constantly in her mouth, Ms. Fonda stares hopefully off into space, runs her fingers anxiously through her hair and throws reams of copy paper — and once even her typewriter — angrily to the floor. She is a writer.

She has not, however, always been a writer. Once she was just a little girl. And that is when she met Julia.

Julia stands or falls on what you think of Julia (Vanessa Redgrave). I happen to think she is a pompous, overly dramatic, arrogant, vainglorious fool. This assessment does not apply to Julia as a child (Lisa Pelikan). Then she was merely willful and petulant.

Robards, Holbrook and Rosemary Murphy have what are, essentially, cameo roles. They hang around for a while impersonating Dashiell Hammett, Alan Campbell and Dorothy Parker.

Robards' role is particularly thankless. All he gets to do is lurk about on the periphery of events, urging Lillian on. Occasionally he gets to make sardonic remarks.

Of course, Robards is one of the best sardonic-remark-makers in the business, but it still doesn't seem a fit way for a grown man to make a living.

Even at that, he fares better than Rosemary Murphy. Her Dorothy Parker doesn't get to say anything. Hal Holbrook's Alan Campbell has a Southern accent and wears a camel's hair coat.

Zinnemann and screenwriter Alvin Sargent seem overly interested in the lesbian connotations of Lillian's relationship with Julia. (In one scene Lillian knocks a man out of his chair for even suggesting such a thing and then throws a table at him. What would Freud say about that?)

Zinnemann, as befits a director who has garnered two Academy Awards, has put together a film that is fastidious, almost perfect in many respects, but that finally lacks real solidity.

The film doesn't focus on the most interesting period in Hellman's life. Her finest hour was unquestionably when she refused to "tailor my convictions to this year's fashions," before the House Un-American Activities Committee. A film about the events leading up to that episode would have really been something to see.

As it is, we have been given our Hellman movie. We will not be given another. Ms. Hellman should throw a table at Fred Zinnemann.

Let's not take *Valentino* too seriously, shall we? Ken Russell's extravagant psycho-history of the great

silent screen lover raises romantic vulgarity to a new plane; gives the grandiloquent gesture a new dimension. But it isn't a menace. It's just puffy and overblown.

"Valentino" is the occasion of Rudolf Nureyev's screen debut. He plays the star using an Italian accent that is located somewhere between a Mulberry Street fruit peddler and Count Dracula. But when Nureyev dances he quickly dispels the impression that he might not really be able to act, particularly in a torrid tango with Nijinsky (Anthony Powell).

Russell, in his fashion, has been faithful to "Valentino." He hasn't mangled Valentino's life any more brutally than he did Mahler's in *Mahler*, or Tchaikovsky's in *The Music Lovers*.

Women never come off particularly well in Russell's movies. "Valentino" is no exception.

Michelle Phillips plays Valentino's wife, the astringent and shrewish Natasha Rambova, with a relentlessness that makes Lady MacBeth seem soft and cuddly in comparison. You can believe almost anything of the woman who guided Valentino's career except that she was capable of love. Her love scenes with Valentino have a certain gymnastic energy, but they don't look like much fun.

Meanwhile, all those years of tasteful ingenueness — Gigi, Lili, Gaby, Fanny — catch up with Leslie Caron. She makes her first appearance in this film arrayed in a mantle of white paper flowers attended by a retinue of serving girls who are, themselves, a funereal vision in a cloud of lavender and black chiffon.

Carol Kane, sloe of eye and wild of mane, is an authentic period piece as the tramp-campy actress identified only as "Fatty's girl" (although

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I somehow got the impression that she was supposed to be Valentino's first wife, Jean Acker). William Hootkis, quivering all over like a bowl of malicious jello, is marvelous as Fatty (Arbuckle, but no particular point is made of it).

"Valentino" was written by Ken Russell and Mardik Martin. The Robert Chartoff-Irwin Winkler production has a MPAA rating of "R," apparently to prevent innocent young minds from being corrupted by sloppy romanticism.

— Barnaby Schackelford

BOOKS

Several gay publications have sampled Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden's pensive, classic-style turn-of-the-century male nude photographs of the boys of Taormina, Sicily. Now Charles Leslie's brief, intimate biography, **Wilhelm von Gloeden, Photographer** (Soho Photographic Publishers, Box 99, New York 10013, \$9.95, 143 pgs.), shows how those hypnotic photos made him world-famous.

Taormina, built in 403 B.C. by Dionysius of Syracuse, was recommended to the consumptive young

gift of a large camera changed von Gloeden's life as he virtually invented male-nude photography — and made it popular in the fastidious Victorian era. His 3000 glass-plate arcadian visions of generally nude youths won worldwide prizes and were avidly collected by Kaiser Wilhelm, Edward VII, Chulalongkorn of Siam, Richard Strauss, Marconi, Gabrielle d'Annunzio, Alexander Graham Bell (who introduced them to the *National Geographic*), Alphonse XIII of Spain, Eleanora Duse, Oscar Wilde and Alfred Krupp, whose tragic effort on Capri to duplicate von Gloeden's openly gay lifestyle nearly toppled the Krupp empire.

The great popularity of the full-frontal and often semi-erect von Gloeden studies indicates some of the ambivalence of the era which crucified Wilde, Krupp and Eulenburg. "Purified" by that careful Arcadian tone, male nudes embracing were acceptable in the best circles.

But even as the photos were hidden away in the world's back drawers after the fascists destroyed most of the plates, von Gloeden posthumously remained Taormina's best publisher — and the aging models remembered il Barone with fondness.

The Joy of Gay Sex by Dr. Charles Silverstein and Edmund White, and **The Joy of Lesbian Sex** by Dr. Emily Sisley and Bertha Harris (Crown Publishers, 1 Park Ave., NY 10010, \$12.95 each) are landmark books, beautifully illustrated by three artists each. (I'd have felt sure both were done by

I'd love to have every drawing and painting framed, and hope they will be exhibited separately, especially the crowquill color drawings early in the male book.)

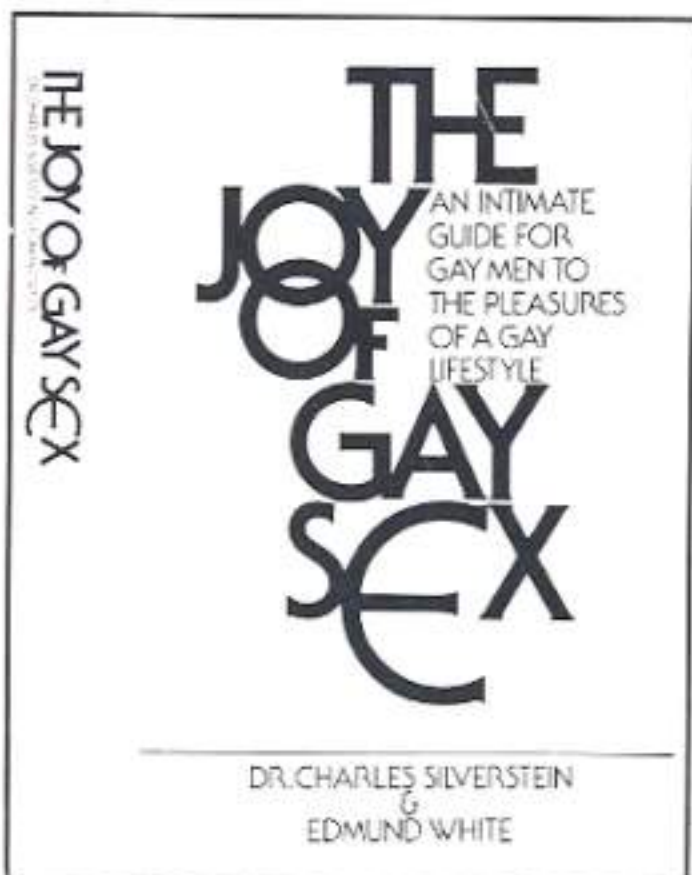
The text in both books is unshakably positive without being pollyanna, lucidly written, and sparkling with gay joy. It never descends to tedious mechanistic instructions, triviality, or pompous squareness as so many sex manuals do. My only complaints (mild) are the implication that gay means only gay male; minor historic disagreements with the male book's introduction; omission of pleasurable (for some) activities like tickling; and the report in the lesbian book, based on an inadequate source, that S&M is extremely rare among gay women. This seems not to be so.

With subject headings arranged alphabetically, the text moves in an exceedingly logical development. Moving, fun, readable, sound, great!

In Ballet's early centuries, and lately under Ballanchine's homophobic influence, male dancers have been cast as mere props for ballerinas to whirl around. **Danseur, The Male in Ballet** (McGraw-Hill, \$19.95, 192 pgs.), by Richard Philp and Mary Whitley (foreword by



artist-aristocrat by another German who'd settled there. (He was later shocked by Wilhelm's bacchanalian parties. The townspeople seemed unshocked as their sons and brothers joined the Prussian's ménage.) When von Gloeden's income was indirectly cut off by his distant cousin, Kaiser Wilhelm, in 1888, the townspeople helped feed him, his sister and Il Moro, his chief young companion, who years later made a ringing defense of the Baron's art in Italy's fascist courts. The Duke of Mecklenberg-Schwerin's



the same art teams except that we're given different names and backgrounds, but no identification for individual drawings and paintings.



Robert Joffrey, special photography by Herbert Migdoll) is a handsome critical history that restores males to central and creative roles, with biogs of most superstars from before Nijinsky to Nureyev, with over 250 soft-focus pictures. Evoking the days when ballet was virtually the only stage for appreciating fine male bodies in spectacular motion, this is an exciting gift or coffee-table book, more informative than most of that class.

But I feel that consistently soft-blurr photos reflects the homophobic bias that ballet watchers should

bars and baths are bullshit.

there is no question.

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see the dancer's form and disregard close bodily detail. Philp and Migdoll are editorially connected with *Dance Magazine*, and Ms. Whitley works with Joffrey.

Hurstey Richey's *Near Fatal Attraction* (Ashley Books, Port Washington, NY 11050, \$8.95, 367 pgs.) is an overlong tale of sex and terror in a West Virginia boy scout troop which some readers will probably find more compelling than I did. The story develops chiefly in a series of 1974 letters between two survivors of the fatal accidents which decimated Red Creek Troop 44 a quarter-century earlier.

Tom Pedigrew, now a Venezuela-based oil engineer, led one squad in the old troop. Roger Stockwell, now a staff writer for the *Red Creek Times*, and trying to reconstruct his distorted memories of the tragedies, led the other. The scouts played a mysterious game whose nature the letters slowly uncover. The story, rather prissy at the start, gets explicitly sexual after 100 pages, and with radical pruning by a careful editor could have been a super suspense yarn. But give it a try. Even with excessive repetition, it moves well.

Noted paperback reissues: (both Bantam Books)

— Charles Reich's *The Sorcerer of Bolinas Reef* (\$2.25, 235 pgs.) one of the most tortured coming-out stories-yet, by the author of *The Greening of America*. If you can stand stories of endlessly-unresolved inner struggle, this is a must.

— Rita Mae Brown's *Rabellaisian classic, Rubyfruit Jungle* (\$1.95, 247 pgs.), is a deeply telling and wildly hilarious account of growing up gay and loving every crazy minute . . .

— Jim Kepner

MUSIC

Something's happening out there, that's for sure. Now, if they can just decide what it is and how to serve it best, they might readily produce some hard coins instead of tokens.

Obviously, there is growing awareness at the recording companies of the importance of the gay market. So far, excepting some specific compositions by individual artists, that awareness has produced little more than transparent pandering to the gay buyer, the messages so foolishly phrased that they never even reach the target.

De-Lite Records has repackaged

selections from Kool and The Gang's *Wild and Peaceful, Lighter Worlds* and other LPs into a two-record specially priced set, *Hollywood Swinging/Summer Madness*.

The front cover is described in self-congratulatory terms as an "example of equal opportunity achieved through merchandising," "a push for human rights," "a product conceived (for the gay community) with the reality of multisexuality up front."

That cover, "a display and example of equal opportunity," is nothing more than a shot of four hookers, possibly female impersonators, on the boulevard. Either way, it's a tired and ugly stereotype of "Hollywood Swinging," precisely the sort of thing De-Lite had sworn to break with. Are you putting us on? Do us no favors, huh?

Fortunately, Kool and The Gang sell to gays, as to others, on the basis on their music, a solid, showmanly presentation, rooted in jazz and flowering into street funk. The two title tracks among 16 are enough to sell the package, without stick-on causes or patronizing politics.

Casablanca Record and Filmworks knows the diverse elements which contribute to their total market and are unique in the industry in reaching and polishing those bases of interest. The Casablanca sound has fueled an equanimous beat at discos of every sexual choice. Wherever the loins might find their bliss, the sound of Donna Summer has lubricated them. Meco's "Star Wars Theme," a disco extravaganza, manages to recreate the joyous spirit of that film in a musical experience far better than Johnny Williams' soundtrack does when separated from its visual accompaniment.

Village People, new from Casablanca, includes among its cover "Thank You" a credit for Colt Studios. The cover shot of men on the streets of Greenwich Village looks like a convention of the best of Colt. The album is a solid pop collage medley in celebration of alternative life styles and self fulfillment, from coast to coast.

There are four long tracks, "San Francisco," "In Hollywood," "Fire Island," and "Village People." The philosophy never intrudes upon the nonstop beat, nor does the message ever abandon the medium. These 13 men provide an exciting musical experience.

Elton John has been skulking out of the limelight this season, reportedly undergoing hair transplants

on the thinning pate of his genius. While we wait for him to return to the recording studio, MCA has released Elton John's **Greatest Hits, Volume II**, an uncommonly good and special package for a hits compendium.

For one thing, it includes four top tunes never before available on an Elton LP: "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds," "Philadelphia Freedom," "Don't Go Breaking My Heart" and his *Tommy* showstopper, "Pinball Wizard." The souvenir booklet and hard inner sleeve are packed with color shots of Elton and Bernie Taupin. In addition to such recent hits as "Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word," the set includes one of our Taupin-John favorites, "Someone Saved My Life Tonight." Oh? You know that feeling?

While Heart, newly berthed at Columbia's Portrait label with *Little Queen*, fights it out with former Mushroom bosses over the contested release of "unauthorized" tracks under the title of *Magazine*, MCA quietly slipped out with their own *Magazine* by the most successful (and best) band in Australia's history, Sherbet.

Lead singer Daryl Braithwaite is quite simply one of the best rock vocalists anywhere today. Listen to his "I Got Love" and "Still In Love With You." The other tunes will hold you whether you're ready to hear them or not. A beautifully produced album.

Brian (a Scotch minister's boy) and Brenda (Brooklyn, black and a showbiz veteran of the *Hair* cast) met on mike as backup singers on old Toronto-based Ray Stevens summer teleseries. As a songwriting team, they've written for Rufus and Walter Jackson.

All ten of the songs they perform together on their second Rocket album, *Supersonic Lover*, are theirs.

A steady, easy gospel-influenced beat marks the best of the blend, notably "You Show Me Your Love (And I'll Show You Mine)."

The verdict thus far: they still sound like top backup singers, not leads.

The cover of Lynyrd Skynyrd's *Street Survivors* (MCA), shot on a burning street set on the Universal backlot, shows guitarist Steve Gaines engulfed in flames which are about to swallow lead singer Ronnie Van Zant. It was released just weeks before and certified gold a day before Van Zant, Gaines and his sister, singer Cassie Gaines, were killed when the private plane carrying the rebel kids of Southern rock crashed in a Mississippi swamp. Having just

entered the top of the charts last year with their live *One More For The Road* album, they were one of the hardest working/performing



groups in the business, just beginning to reap their full reward in a continuing series of record sell-outs on the tour which ended with the crash.

Some additional tapes exist, but the best was to come, and that legacy, too, perished in the swamp.

— Damon West



LOS ANGELES

Neil Simon's *Chapter Two*, which by this time has already opened in New York, provided a brilliant beginning for managing director Robert Fryer's 1977-78 season at the Music Center's **Ahmanson Theater**. This is the second time Fryer has secured the world premier of a new Simon play for the Ahmanson—the first was *California Suite* two seasons ago—and they now seem to have an excellent relationship going.

"Chapter Two" is based on Simon's personal experiences following the death of his first wife and his subsequent marriage to actress Marsha Mason. It is definitely one of his best plays yet, and I wouldn't be surprised if it earned the Pulitzer Prize for drama for this prolific playwright.

In addition to being a very funny play, filled with Simon's usual society, it is also extremely warm and human. The performances of Judd Hirsch, Anita Gillette, Ann Wedgeworth and Cliff Gorman (who's come a long way since *Boys in the Band*) are all flawless under Herbert Ross' tender, sensitive direction.

Fryer is following "Chapter Two" with George Bernard Shaw's *The Devil's Disciple*, which opens Dec.

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17, starring Rex Harrison and Chris Sarandon (Al Pacino's lover in *Dog Day Afternoon*). Frank Dunlop is directing this production, which marks the beginning of a unique new cooperative venture between the Ahmanson and Dunlop's Brooklyn Academy of Music Acting Co. in New York.

Following the Los Angeles engagement, which ends Jan. 28, "The Devil's Disciple" will then move to New York and, in exchange, Dunlop's production of *The New York Idea*, which he presented earlier this year, will go into the Ahmanson as Fryer's third production of the season, playing Feb. 17 - April 1.

A Chorus Line, which has been playing to steadily decreasing business at the **Shubert Theater** (although still taking in substantial weekly grosses), will finally end its Los Angeles engagement with a gala New Year's Eve champagne celebration on Dec. 31. The musical, which will have played here for a record 79 weeks, will then move to Chicago, where advance sales are reportedly over \$2 million.

Coming to the Shubert in 1978 are *Sly Fox*, starring George C. Scott and Trish Van Devere (Mrs. Scott in real life), and *Annie* (although at press time there was still a chance that this musical may play the Pantages Theater instead of the Shubert).

Jane Powell and Howard Keel rekindled their old screen magic and proved that there is still a lot of life left in *South Pacific* in spite of the extremely dated book. They reprised the glorious Rodgers & Hammerstein score during a limited three-week engagement at the **Pantages Theater** in a lavish, attractive production that was directed with spirit and substance by Donald Driver. There's now talk about taking it to New York.

Carol Channing is currently gracing the Pantages stage in a revival of *Hello Dolly*; and upcoming attractions include John Raitt in *Shenandoah*, Jan. 5-26, and Richard Kiley in *Man of La Mancha*, March 9-30.

The **Westwood Playhouse** is offering the West Coast premiere of David Rabe's searing drama,

Streamers, Dec. 14 - Feb. 12. William Friedkin, who was originally announced to make his stage directorial debut with this, had to bow out because of previous film commitments, but Richard Thomas is starring. I'll have more about this important event in the next issue.

Halloween — the rest of the country's answer to New Orleans' Mardi Gras — is always big in L.A., with several really big bashes. Among the biggest was that held at the Hollywood Paladium (former home of the Lawrence Welk Show) by the GGRC ("Gay Girls' Riding Club").

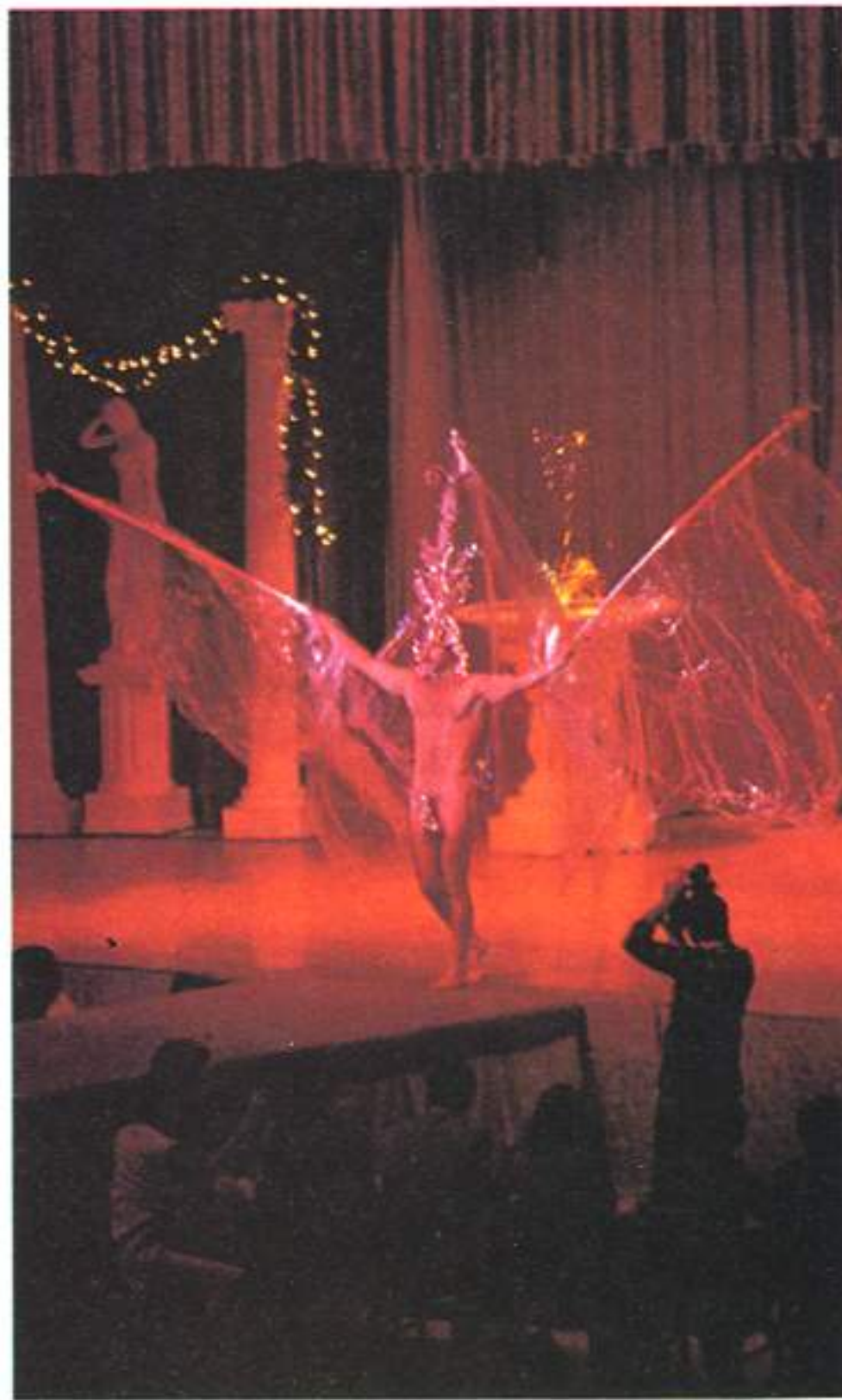
— Ron Englert

NEW YORK

Something new in gay entertainment has started to take roots in the Big Apple — the Gay Circus — which is a wonderful idea and could eventually be expanded into a big commercial success. The atmosphere of the Gay Circus might include your mix of



Photo by Charles Adams



Halloween in Los Angeles gives camp-minded gays a chance to go all the way, in lavish spectacles like the annual GGRC ball.

Los Angeles Times
CHEMICAL 'RUSH'
IS A HOT ITEM

head
THE PLAYBOY ADVISOR

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All over the Big Apple, in fact, are these mixtures of gay entertainment. And if you're coming this way you should definitely make an effort to check them out — from The Big Top and its sister palace across the street, The Broadway Arms (in the theater district), to the Jewel Theater, with its newest discovery, Malo the Midnight Cowboy. Believe it or not, Queens has Mike de Marco pumping his red hot iron at The Adult Fair. His act is

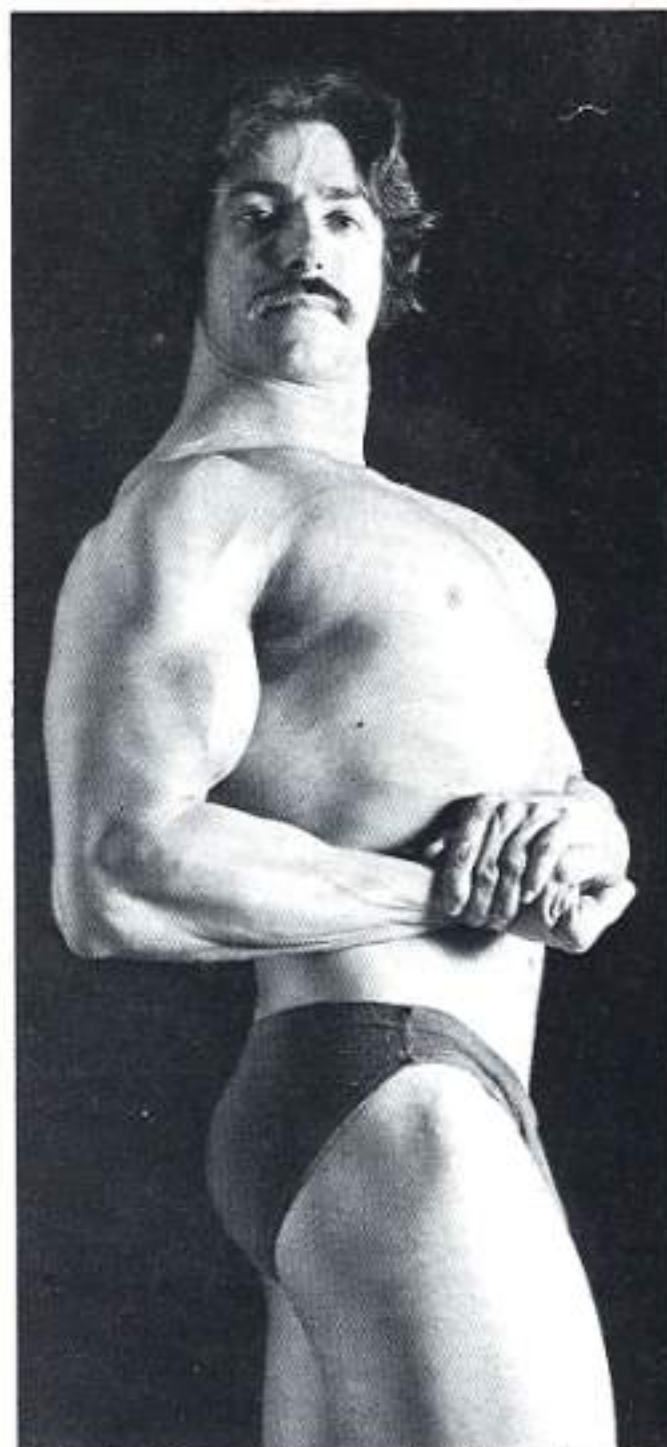


Photo courtesy of Jewel Theater

Mike de Marco shows what he's made of at The Adult Fair.

best mixed with gusts of amyl.... "Whatever you want, it'll be here," says Mike, whose revue is a sensational spurt to the New York scene. In addition to Mike, though, you'll see a Japanese boy do a sensational anal number with chains and crisco all timed out to The Blue Danube Waltz! Talk about class!



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Changes in the scene these days include a surprise switch from homo to hetero over at **The Continental Baths**, so don't spend money needlessly. And you might well be aware that **Tom Cat Bookstores** have raised their turnstile fares to a dollar if you want back-room action—they say "inflation" is the reason, but it does keep out a certain element of undesirables. For my money, the best things in life are free, even if it is cold outside. Oh yes, **The Ramrod** is tops on the waterfront right now. The notorious **Anvil** has turned into a juice bar and has largely been forgotten.

Let's quickly jump to the media scene for the moment: David Rothenberg and Arthur Bell are writing up a storm in **The Village Voice**. Get this publication—you should be aware of the Addison Verrill murder that occurred last Fall in the Village. I've never seen so much bad snow and black pimps inundating Christopher Street. If you're hearing a lot of negatives on the gay side of life, the truth is more welcome than the rip-off any day. While we'd all like to say gay is great, there's a seamy side that demands exposure, and the straights often just put us down in general or do a quick cover up, Italian-style. Look at the Bronfman case and *Son of Sam*—do you really think you got the whole story, guys? Better start demanding the truth and turn off the platitudes, please. Let's raise some consciousness in the press, especially on the boob tube. Hopefully, Mayor Koch will change a few things around.

Resort life near Manhattan is a great idea, but check out the scene first with a few phone calls to your New York friends before you let some travel agent book you into **Motel-on-the-Mountain** or **Continental**. While they're only minutes away from New York, they're far from winterized and mostly drag. New York gays are trying to change these conditions fast with these managements, to make them more butch. But a word to the wise—don't invest gay dollars without solid information. Ad campaigns are not enough.

Honesty may get me in trouble...

It's an up to welcome back **The Joffrey Ballet** to New York, and most especially Greg Huffman, whose dance leads in *Romeo and Rodeo* have taken New York by storm. Originally from Florida, Greg's got a smooth style mixed with cowboy flair that's a hard act to follow. Another cowboy surprise is **Circle Rep's Feedlot**, Patrick

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Meyers' new play about psychosexuality in a Texas grain elevator. First produced at Berkeley Stage Company, the show has a wide popularity here. Finally, while many new shows are scheduled this winter for Broadway, Frank Langella's *Dracula* will hopefully be with us for a long time. It's a brilliant camp mix of Edward Gorey visuals and champagne-chic performances. Langella emerges out of the air with a black cape and elegant fangs to suck the blood out of your every pore. A chilling thought, yet oh so delicious, if you're thinking of wending your way to fair Gotham this winter. Bring along a turtle-neck, my friends . . .

— David Sears

WASHINGTON, D.C.

October 1, 1977, will be remembered as the night Washington gays got together for a cause. The "Encore for Freedom" night at the Kennedy Center Concert Hall was sponsored by the Dialog for Human Rights, an ad hoc coalition to fight the Anita Bryant forces. Gotham and Barbara Cook headlined the evening, supported by lots of good local talent. It was one



David Schechter, Paul Kandel, Mark Zagaeski, and Rocky Greenberg give their all in *Nightclub Cantata*.

Photo by Joe B. Mann

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM FRENCH

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of those uplifting nights none who were present will soon forget.

The tragic Cinema Follies fire Oct. 17 cast a heavy pall over the entire Washington gay community, but we're slowly getting back to normal. Fall and winter bring Washington the cultural season, which helps bring spirits up, and this year promises to be an exceptional one. The American Ballet Theater and the New York City Ballet will be appearing at the Opera House of the Kennedy Center.

Eugene O'Neill's *A Touch of the Poet*, with Jason Robards, played the Eisenhower Theater Nov. 14-Dec. 17. The Arena Stage (16th and Maine Ave. S.W.) opened with a splendid production of Peter Nichols' *The National Health*, which was followed by Bertolt Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* Dec. 2-Jan. 8. The Kreeger, the Arena Stage's other playhouse, opened with Elizabeth Swado's *Nightclub Cantata*, a beautiful new musical combining song, sketch, and poetry — both comic and poignant — excellently performed by a young cast.

The Folger Theater Group (201 East Capitol St., S.E.) kicked off its season with the American premiere of David Hare's *Teeth 'n' Smiles* — a stunning production

with superb acting. *Two Gentlemen of Verona* took over the Folger Nov. 30.

Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide...* packed them into the National Theater, followed by *Timbuktu*, a new musical based on the classic *Kismet*, and starring Eartha Kitt and Melba Moore.

The big event on the bar scene is the Pier's (1824 Half St., S.W.) new laser show. The Pier is very grand with its new decor of desert palms and grey carpeting, and with its new Lasermania, created by flashing laser rays on a vinyl screen on the dance floor. A real stunner. If you want a strictly mental high while dancing, check this out.

Dinner is always a delight at the Lost and Found (56 "L" St., S.E.), one of the best gay dinner bars in town. The place is always jammed (where do all these beautiful people come from...and where do they go?).

Opening soon — if it isn't already by the time you read this — is the (membership) Olympic Baths (1405 "H" St., N.W., 2nd floor), with promise of escape from the ordinary for all your wants. The Roman Delight (7001 Blair Rd., N.W.) continues to live up to its

name. It's a bath and health club with steam and sauna, plus exercise equipment.

— Greg Kodjanian

BOSTON

When a bathhouse is not exactly a health club, nor a "massage parlor" yet both of these, what is it? In Boston, it's *Jupiter in Aries* (283 Dartmouth St.), a brand new establishment which offers "massage exclusively for men by men."

On a recent visit I met Kal LeBow, who, with his brother Herb, manages *Jupiter in Aries*. In denying rumors that they are in competition with the two bathhouses in Boston, Kal explained that *Jupiter in Aries* is not sexually oriented. "We offer a legitimate massage by trained and qualified masseurs. An alternative to the baths, but not a competitor," Kal stated. "And surprisingly enough, we've been very successful." And well they should. *Jupiter in Aries* is not located in any dangerous or deserted section of the city, but smack in the middle of respectable and beautiful Back Bay (just two blocks from Bette Davis's home in *Now Voyager*).

What is the place itself like? Its

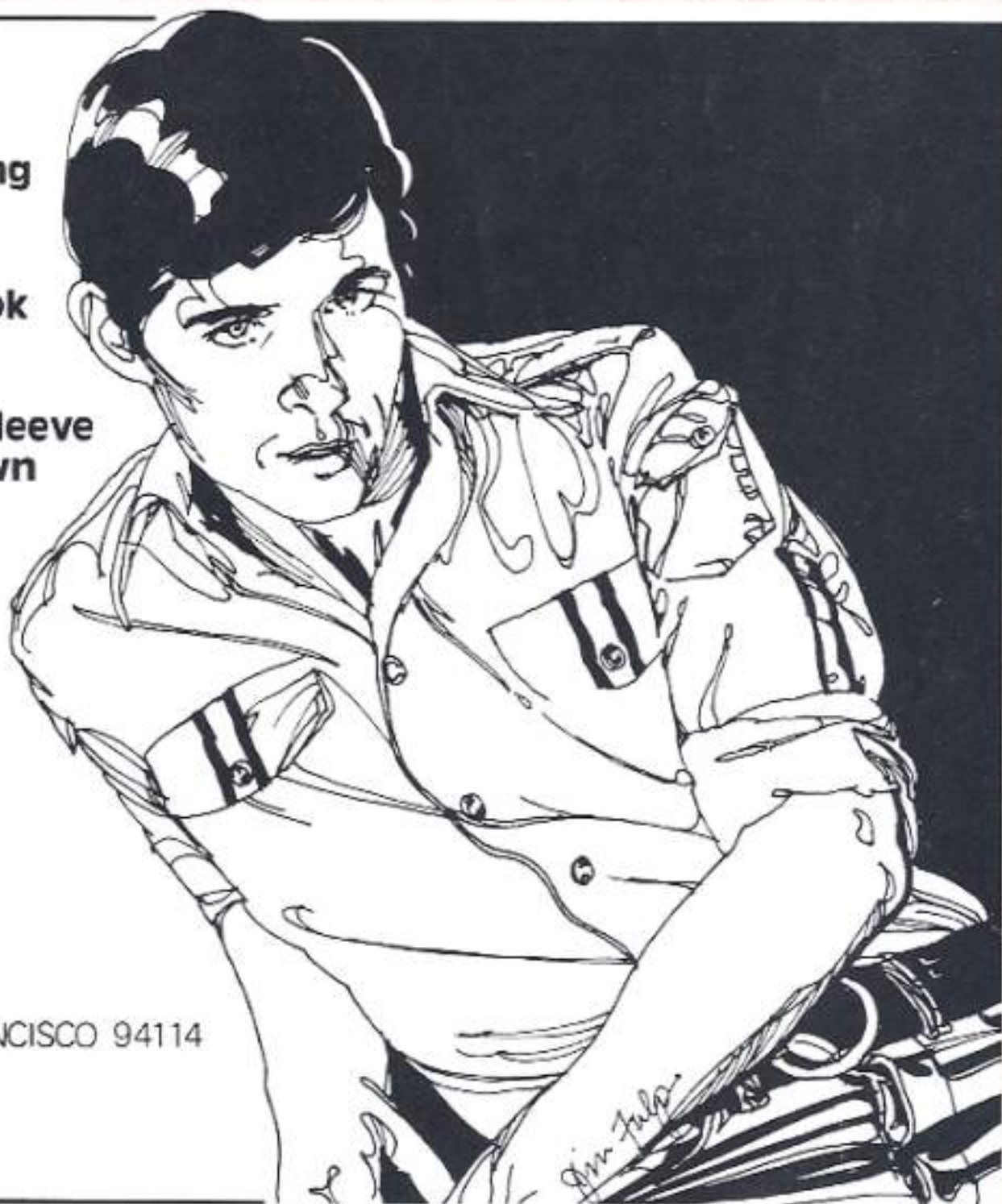
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two floors of rooms are immaculately clean, well designed, and evocatively lighted. There is a sauna, a whirlpool bath, and of course showers (complete with hair care products and blow dryers). On the upper level are a comfortable lounge, where waiters will serve drinks while you relax, a game room and a weight room. Fire exits are clearly marked and easily accessible, an important consideration in these paranoid and safety-conscious times.

For a very reasonable price, clients can choose from three types of massage, or a combination. There's the full body oil massage, the vibrator massage, and the feather massage (talc applied with a rapid-but-light finger touch). The client also can choose his masseur, which isn't easy because all the employees are both handsome and personable. The impoverished with good credit will be happy to learn that major credit cards are accepted. Membership is not yet required, but due to the growing clientele it will soon be offered. Members will be treated to a variety of entertainments, including films, fashion shows, lectures and the like.

Kal pointed up that the clientele has been a mixture of gay and straight men, coexisting without static. "We're a legitimate organization," he said "and people see this when they walk in here. We have the complete backing of the Back Bay Association and are fully licensed." *Jupiter in Aries* is a welcome and pleasant addition to Boston, and is open daily from 10 a.m. to 12 midnight. Further information will gladly be given by calling (617) 267-7590.

— Joseph Cain

MIAMI

While most of the hotels on Miami Beach are crying the blues over poor business, the largest gay resort, the **Windward** (16051 Collins Ave.) is having a full house. The Windward Resort has added a bath and nude sun bathing to its guest facilities. Winter rates are \$32.00 per room to \$48.00 per room and includes free membership to the bath house. There is also a disco, a game room, and an olympic size pool. The Windward provides various types of activities for its guests — there are always dance contests going on or pajama parties being planned. Never a dull moment!

A few miles up the road is Fort Lauderdale and the world famous **Marlin Beach Hotel** (17 So. At-

lantic Blvd.), which continues to be the number-one gay resort in that city. The Marlin Beach, which commands a sweeping view of the blue Atlantic, is forever coming up with clever gimmicks for the entertainment of the guests. One of the biggest attractions is the Sunday afternoon tea dance which brings in men from all over South Florida. The rooms are in the medium price category. The Marlin Beach Hotel is famous for the Poop Deck and the dancing that goes on there.

Fort Lauderdale may be where the boys are, but the **Club Miami Bath** (2991 Coral Way, Miami) is where you'll find the men. Club Miami has added a parking area and a sauna to compliment the steamroom already there. The pool area has been enlarged and now boasts a cabana area. The Club Miami is one of the few baths in the U.S. where you can swim under the stars in December and January without freezing to death, since the night air is usually about 72 degrees.

The Great Artists Series, sponsored by Temple Beth Shalom of Miami Beach, continues to bring the top names in the world of music to South Florida. The Great Artists Series presents violinist Itzhak Perlman and the Florida Philharmonic Dec. 21; violinist Yehudi Menuhin Jan. 18; Leontyne Price, one of the great voices of the century, on Feb. 6; and pianist Rudolf Serkin, Feb. 13. All of the artists will appear at the Miami Beach Theatre of the Performing Arts. The Great Artists Series is celebrating its 10th Anniversary season and continues to be a big drawing card for the world's greatest musicians. Usually all performances are sold out before the curtain time. Tickets range from \$7.50 to \$25.00.

An entertainer to keep your eyes on is David Chesky, pianist, arranger, and composer from Miami Beach. David is twenty years old, 5'10" tall, 140 lbs., brown eyes and hair, and a brilliant arranger and composer. He started on Miami Beach at the old Martinique Hotel with his own band when he was 12 years old and from there went on to play at most of the hotels on the Gold Coast. The David Chesky Band recently played at New York's Storyville, where he again received outstanding notices. This is a young man we'll be hearing a lot more about in the near future. Remember — you heard about him first in IN TOUCH.

The Miami Beach Theatre of the Performing Arts continues to bring
(continued on page 87)

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introducing



Marc Wolfe

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYAN BOYD

Six days a week at the gym plus a super-strict diet have been Marc Wolfe's erector set in constructing one of the nicest bodies around. Though the gym and college take up a lot of the 22-year-old Libra's time, he still manages to squeeze in an occasional backpacking trip into the "wilds." And his current outdoor fascination is learning to sail a friend's catamaran. "I'll have it made," Marc says with a grin, "as soon as I learn port from starboard without having to think about it."





A LOVERS' PRIMER

PART II

Finding a lover is no easy task—but holding on to him once you have him can be even harder.

by Jeremy Hughes

If you were paying attention back in Issue #31, you picked up some hints in PART I or A LOVERS' PRIMER on how to approach starting a love affair.

Here, now, are ten more suggestions—this time on ways to help sustain that association.

The heart of this matter, let's face it right off the bat, is sex. Not, contrary to uptight straight accusations, because we are basically more promiscuous than "they," but, rather, that we are subject to more opportunities (a factor becoming less and less viable in the permissive seventies). Thus, at the very top of any handy-dandy little list on how to keep your love alive, must be this business of coming to a mutual accommodation as regards "playing around."

1) Being, to all intents and nefarious purposes, human, both you and your guy are going to be prey to temptation. There is no way to shut yourselves off from that big wide world out there, filled to its succulent brim with available tricks—at parties, discos, bars, supermarkets, clothing stores, theater lobbies, and street corners. And it seems that the very minute you have come to an understanding with a certain someone regarding monogamy, opportunities to stray proliferate.

(There are sound reasons for this. Psychologically, the white heat of your new sex life heightens your awareness to the potential sexuality of others; and, physiologically, the euphoria you feel is reflected in the assurance of your bearing and the warm glow of your general aura. Here, as in other fields, nothing succeeds like excess.)

Anyhow, some fairly specific ground rules must be established. But please, make them realistic, taking into account the kinds of people the two of you are. It is virtually impossible to rule out extra-curricular sex entirely, especially if you are on different schedules and, of necessity, left on occasion to your own individual devices. A useful rule of thumb is to agree to keep your "home base" inviolable: no tricking in the love nest. Another is that whenever you go out together, you come back together. *En fin*, learn to distinguish between love and lust, in yourself as well as in your partner.

Our greatest challenge in maintaining long-time gay relationships, whether of the "open marriage" or more-formally-established variety, is the fact that society hasn't provided single-sex alliances with the precedents and traditions that heterosexual couplings are able to lean on (whether for good or ill is a moot point). We rarely have any external form of official certification or legitimate church proclamation to intimidate us into a longevity of our twosomings, so we must find our determination within ourselves.

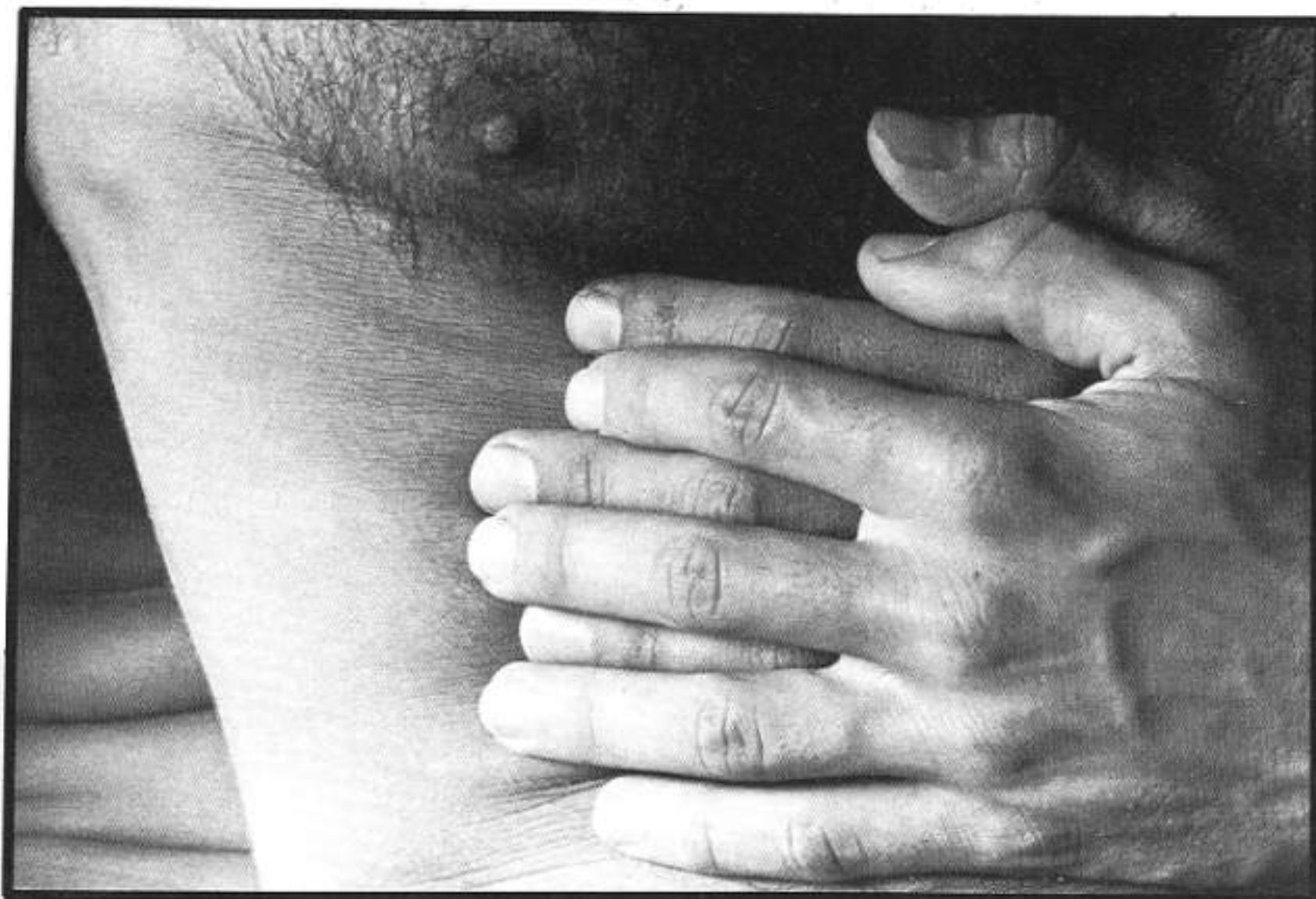


Photo by Bob Finney

2) When occasions arise that require a separation of more than a day or two, clarify and review your agreements regarding fidelity. Beware of trapping yourselves into idealistic pledges to "tell all" upon seeing each other again, and allow whatever revelations there might be to have the innocence of spontaneity. On the other hand, try to remember that while communication is better than silence, actions can sometimes speak louder than words.

3) At this point it's useful to remind yourselves that, inasmuch as a homosexual relationship has greater potential for equality than a heterosexual one, it also has greater potential for discord. Because there cannot be two "bosses," it's mandatory to examine all invidious childhood conditioning about what is "masculine" and what "feminine," so that role-playing within the parameters of these admittedly shadowy areas can be *shared*.

You see, unless each of you is uncharacteristically secure and content in the totality of a dominant or submissive role (as found in some of the outer reaches of sexual encounters) it will help to keep your love alive if you alternate being the "papa" and the "mama." Basically, you will find it to both your advantages to de-emphasize "roles" as thoroughly as you can.

4) Here's a goody: develop a sensitivity to your lover's weaknesses, so that you're able to avoid them. This runs the gamut of everything from the supremely silly ("I can't stand those wing-tip shoes") to the seemingly serious ("I can't stand that infernal whistling"). Each of you must bear in mind, however, that there is — quite literally — no

future in sacrificing your own needs or identity just to massage a lover's ego.

5) Be careful in making reference to former lovers. Now, it would be rare, indeed, if either of you had been celibate prior to your commitment, and brief mentions of "Todd" or "Eddie" are bound to slip out. Face these facts frankly, but sugar the pill by finding *two* nice things to say about your current Number One for every slightly positive remark you inadvertently drop about one of your exes.

6) Avoid trying to re-shape your lover in your own image. After all, you fell in love with him the way he is, warts and all, so don't embark upon a relentless campaign to win him over to Purcell, Proust, the Poldarks, or prunes. You will, in fact, find both your lives richer if you consciously attempt to nurture those areas of interest which make the two of you different. Attempting to transform someone into a carbon copy of yourself only results in tension, and nothing interferes more with romance than that.

7) Discover the catharsis of admitting a mistake, one of the most overlooked of routes to compatibility. This is particularly true when your lover confesses to having been in the wrong on some testy bone of contention between you. If necessary, fabricate a fault of your own, so that you and he may indulge in the delights of mutual forgiveness.

8) Keep a list somewhere readily available of important dates (his birthday, your anniversary, the first time "we did it") and commemorate them, no matter how inexpensively: little things *do* mean a lot! Make your tokens of remembrance as in-

tensely personal as possible — his birthday is not the appropriate time to present him with a new rubber plant "for the house." Much more thoughtful would be a nicely-framed snapshot of that poodle he once loved so dearly, especially if you make the frame yourself.

9) To avoid falling into a deadening rut, keep your love alive through the element of surprise. This does *not* mean you should spring something startlingly new on each other every hour on the half hour, but that, at least once every few weeks, a conscious altering of routine can be as aphrodisiacal as a dozen oysters. Examine your lifestyle to discover which elements, be they ever so mundane, have become sheer habit — from the juice you serve at breakfast to the time you go to bed — and then decide together how to effect a change.

10) Finally (and the last should be first), take your time before even entering into a hopefully long-term relationship. Old-fashioned as it may sound, a "getting to know you" courtship period, during which you get to know each other *out* of bed, helps increase your chances of success. Critical decisions ought not be made in the height of passion, and the odds in your favor go up dramatically when you are friends as well as lovers.

Edwardian novelist Elinor Glyn said it first fifty-five years ago: "the most difficult thing in the world is to make a man love you when he sees you every day." *IN TOUCH* hopes some of the suggestions above bring a small measure of insight that will help keep *your* love alive.

Shapings Up

by Michael J. Mitchell

Illustration by
Richard Fletcher

Reading "Body English" is an increasingly popular sport among gays. Interpreting the arch of an eyebrow, the angle of the head, the way the arms are held or the legs crossed can tell a great deal about a person. But there's a far more elemental form of "Body English" that conveys an even clearer message. What sort of message does your body send out? Place yourself in the following situations and try to hear what your body is saying about you:

You're enjoying a beautiful day at the beach. Unexpectedly, a heavy-set bully walks by and contemptuously kicks sand in your direction. You: (a) try to pretend you enjoy the sting of sand in your face; (b) try to control your temper but plan to return home and take your rage out on your 95-lb. lover; (c) vow to make yourself less inviting to such insults by building up some muscle power. (Select one.)

After spending a small fortune on a new wardrobe only a year ago, you find that your tailored shirts have begun to sport unsightly bulges around the waistline (your chic Gucci is now a gauche Gucci). You (a) dig up your old receipts and charge back to Lord Bonwit Fields & Company to demand your refund; (b) give them all to the Little Brothers of the Unloved and rush out to buy another hundred dollars' worth, but in a size larger; (c) decide it's you and not your shirts that need the tailoring. (Again, select one.)

You have spent four unrewarded hours at the baths. As you pass a couple in the passageway, you overhear them refer to you as a "Pink Elephant." You: (a) write them off as chauvinists; (b) exchange your towel for a full-length robe; (c) go talk to the guys you saw working with the weights in the recreation area. (Choose a, b, or c.)

Although exaggerated, if you answered other than "c" to any of the examples given, it might indicate that you are deficient in basic body language skills because, let's face it, people can't hear you because you're constantly being upstaged. What you'd like to communicate with your body and what others are actually receiving is in contradiction. Learning to master our bodies and thereby communicate clearly, easily, and dynamically is what we've all come to learn (and avoid) as physical fitness.

Sure, everyone has been meaning to get with physical fitness, and if good intentions were deeds, there would be the makings of a great

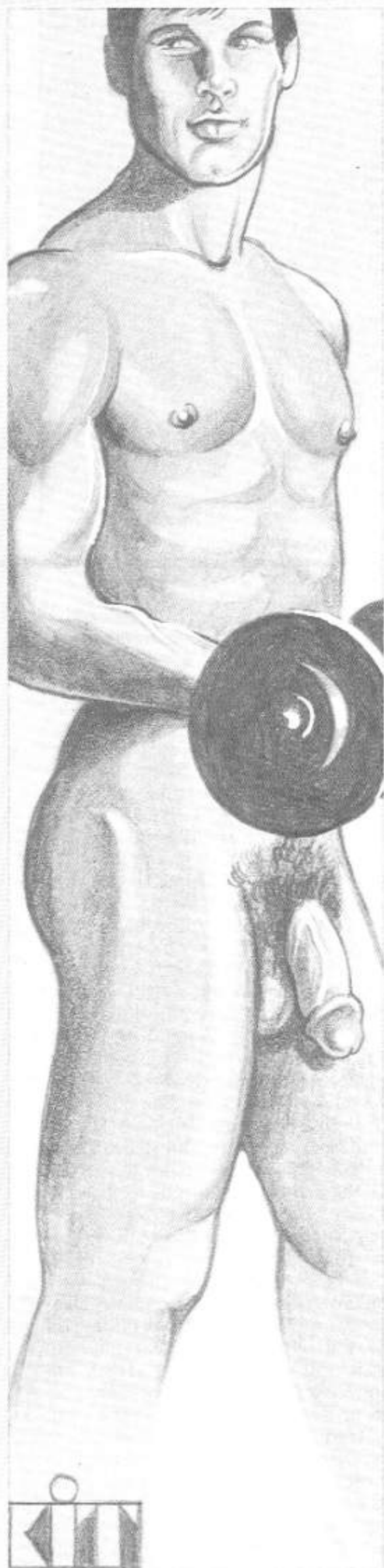
mutual admiration society. Problem is, most of the men in trouble with their bodies are still trying to hide from the fact that it's time for a showdown. Those who have tried Dr. X's Amazing Diet Plan or Mr. Muscle's 5-minute Body Revitalizer know who you are.

Starting out with some good intentions and perhaps a good idea or two, many men defeat themselves before they really get established on the road to fitness without realizing why. There are five major points which should be considered if there is to be any degree of success, and most of all, pleasure, in programed physical activities.

First, determine the amount of time that can be *regularly* devoted each week to participating in a chosen sport. Any schedule which runs on an as-time-permits basis is no schedule at all. The same goes for any schedule which allows more than a few days to pass between sessions. Ideally, each session in your physical activity schedule should be evenly spaced in order to allow the body to rest and recover from the demands that exercise places on it.

Try to schedule your activity during hours not normally filled by work, meals, sleep, or other essential activities. After work or before bed would be good. Friday or Saturday nights would be bad. (The popularity of these two nights for social activities would only invite scheduling conflicts.) However, in several of the larger cities, gay men have gotten together on an informal basis to form football, baseball, and volleyball teams which meet and play regularly. Some have grown so large that they have expanded their activities to include special trips and gay community service projects. Many new friendships have been made in this way, not to mention the improvement in the over-all level of physical fitness. It's easy to see how much fun physical activities can be when you watch these guys in action. The key is to plan wisely what time is available, not choose an activity and then try to *find* time to participate.

Next, add up the cost of several activities from which you might choose one or two. Will your budget stand the strain of activity fees, lessons, club dues, equipment, and transportation? Getting yourself involved in an activity only to find out further down the road that the expense is prohibitive can knock the wind out of your sails. Don't rush out, for example, and buy up every item of equipment you can get your



hands on. You might end up watching your investment collect dust if you change your mind.

Now, grab the Yellow Pages and look up facilities available within easy reach of your job or home. This may be determined, in part, by the climate and size of the city in which you live. In some areas there will be numerous facilities, ranging from beginners' to advanced; spartan to lavish. Local YMCAs would be an example of the spartan and inexpensive type (\$50-\$70 yearly). The European Health Spa chain operation would represent the other end of the spectrum, where initial membership fees are several hundred dollars plus an annual renewal charge.

Before you make up your mind, calculate the cost per session, not the cost per year. If, for example, you join a YMCA for a minimal \$55 per year and play handball three times each week, that would average out to about \$1 per week or 33c per session. Quite a bargain! However, if there is only one "Y" in your town with only two handball courts, it might be worth as much as \$1 per session (or \$160 yearly) in order to join an athletic club or handball league, thereby eliminating overcrowding and tight scheduling. Much will also depend on weather or seasonal conditions, small or large areas needed for playing your sport, natural facilities or man-made ones. City and county park systems will sometimes have limited facilities, and don't overlook your own house or apartment building. With few, if any, modifications, your home can become an ideal place in which to exercise, saving you both money and travel time.

What about your age and general physical condition? With the help of your doctor, determine what your physical limitations are according to heredity, build, weight, age, and critical vital signs. This will give you a true picture of what shape you're currently in, what potential problems to watch out for, what goals are realistic for you, and what pace to establish. This doesn't mean that physical limitations will automatically mean limits on all fitness activities. It does mean that you'll be alerted to potential injuries resulting from too much strain on weak areas of your body. A medical evaluation will also help you determine what needs to be strengthened, if possible, and brought up to the level of your overall physical proficiency. Find the balance of natural ability and

(continued on page 52)

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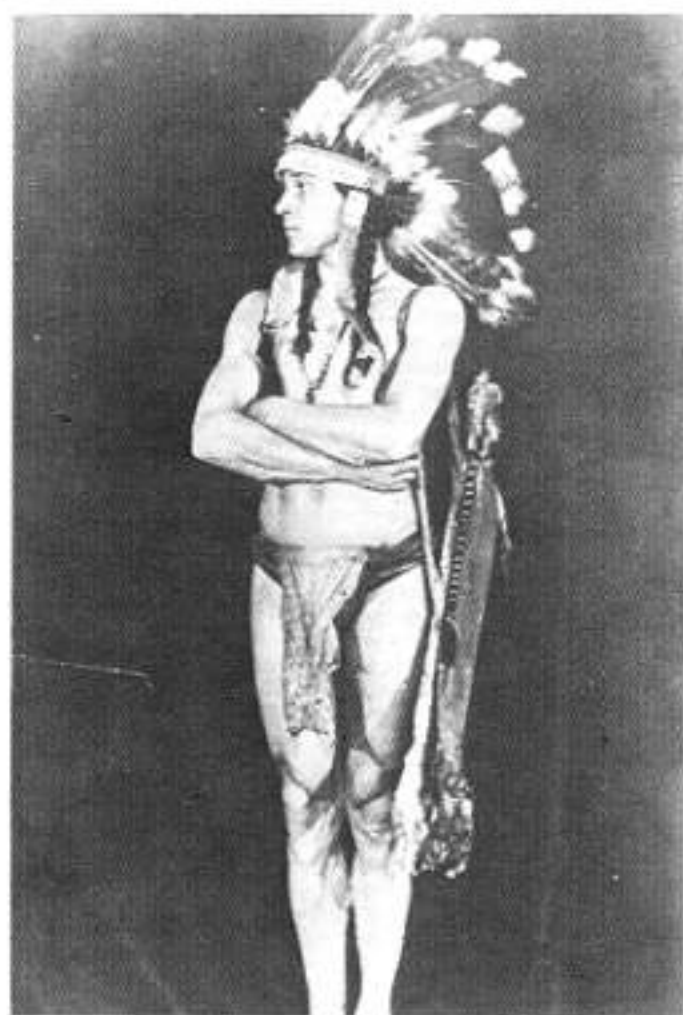
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Rudolph Valentino in an early pose



Larry ("Buster") Crabbe as Tarzan



Errol Flynn as Gentleman Jim

Those who produce movies have always been fascinated by sex. But after the advent of talking pictures, two powerful watchdog groups kept a close watch on Hollywood's output. Most notable were the John Hayes office and the Catholic Legion of Decency.

The Hayes office had strict rules about the amount of cleavage an actress could show on screen, and forbade showing the inside of a woman's thigh. And if a couple were pictured in the bedroom, each had to have a separate bed — and usually the man was dressed in baggy pajamas, and wore a bathrobe to boot. A "C" rating (which meant "condemned" from the Catholic rating board) made seeing the film a mortal sin for Catholics, and usually resulted in a flop at the boxoffice.

(When a producer I know heard that the Catholics had condemned *Chicken Chronicles*, a youth-oriented film starring screen newcomer Steve Guttenberg, he exclaimed enviously, "I wish they would condemn my picture. It would earn thousands more at the boxoffice!" Times do change.)

By and large, women were treated as objects of mystery — beautiful but remote. Even in their bath scenes, they were covered to their chins with tons of bubbles. They wore flesh-colored bathing suits for shower scenes.

Fortunately, no one seemed to care too much about what the men were wearing, or not wearing, except in the bedroom. Attitudes

HOLLYWOOD

beefcake

by Dan Pattarson

A darkened theater, a box of popcorn, and a hunky movie idol butchering his way across the screen. A star-struck moviegoer remembers. . . .

toward men were more relaxed and permissive — even a pair of swim trunks would do. So, many men bared their chests and flexed their muscles to the delight of gay moviegoers. Among the early displayers of masculine pulchritude were Errol Flynn, Johnny Weissmuller, Buster Crabbe, Jon Hall, Richard Denning, Guy Madison, and others. The gals adored them; the gay guys liked them, too — and helped make their pictures successful at the boxoffice.

Coming on the scene in the 50's were a new crop of attractive guys, including Troy Donahue, Rock Hudson, Paul Newman, Nick Adams, James Dean, Fabian, Bobby Darin, Audie Murphy, John Kerr, Elvis Presley and Tab Hunter. (Tab made being shipwrecked on his *Island of Desire* seem like paradise.)

In the 60's came George Hamilton, Burt Reynolds, and Bruce Dern. These and such actors as Ryan O'Neal, Jack Nicholson, Keith Carradine, Perry King, Jon Voight and Jan-Michael Vincent are still taking off their shirts today.

Seeing good-looking guys with physiques is a time honored pleasure and inspiration. A thing of beauty is always a joy to see. But watching them on the screen inspired many a guy to keep in shape, to diet and to work out at the gym.

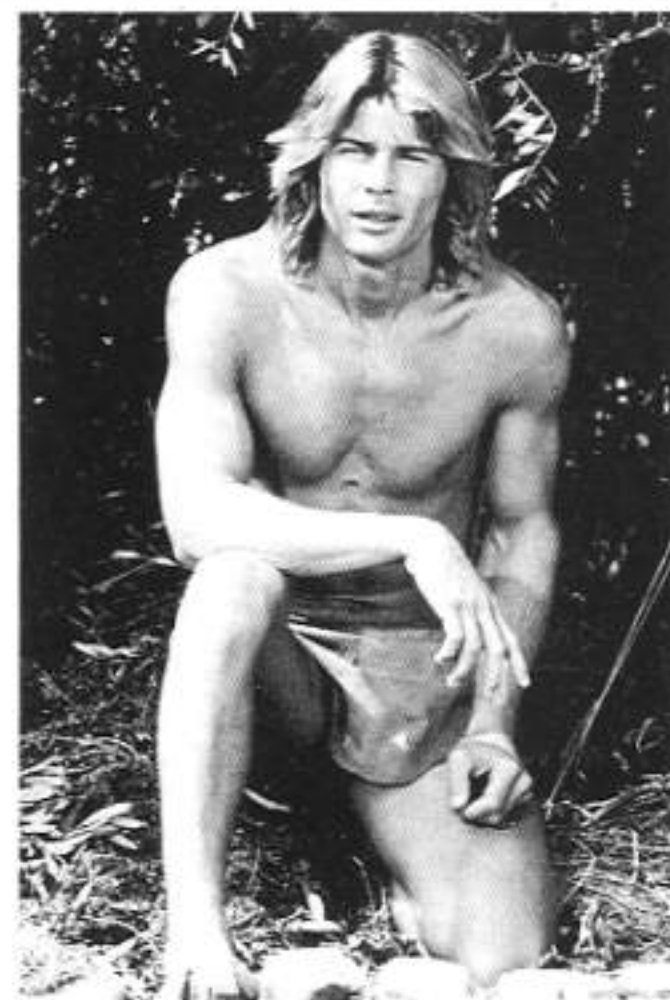
Undressing in front of the camera brought the guys on the screen in closer contact with the guys who bought the tickets. The action represented a closeness, a camaraderie that held special appeal for many



William Holden in *Picnic*



John Philip Law, Jane Fonda in *Barbarella*



Jan-Michael Vincent in *World's Greatest Athlete*

men. It was also a symbol of youth and health, vigor and virility, manliness. Those who had it flaunted it. And are still doing so.

Certain roles naturally lent themselves to showing some skin: boxer, jungle lord, seaman, swimmer, and indian.

Among the many actors who played prize-fighters were Wayne Morris in *Kid Galahad* (1937) — which was later remade with Elvis Presley in the title role. William Holden made his film debut in *Golden Boy* (1939) and took his shirt off in such other films as *Picnic*. Errol Flynn starred as *Gentleman Jim*, but showed his fine physique in such other films as *Sea Hawk*. The late war hero, Audie Murphy, played a fighter in *World In My Corner* (1955). Paul Newman played a boxer in *Somebody Up There Likes Me* and put on the gloves again for a fight scene with George Kennedy in *Cool Hand Luke*. More recently, Sylvester Stallone and Carl Weathers slugged it out in *Rocky* (1976).

The list of actors and athletes who have played Tarzan is fairly well known. Johnny Weissmuller played the role of the jungle lord twelve times, and is the best known of the Tarzans. Jock Mahoney took time out from making westerns to play the lead in *Tarzan the Magnificent* and *Tarzan Goes To India*. Ron Ely played Tarzan mostly on TV and in a few movies; he also played *Doc Savage*. Former gridiron star Mike Henry and played Tar-

zan with a hairy chest. (Hunky Denny Miller was the only blond Tarzan.)

Buster Crabbe played Tarzan once, *Flash Gordon*, *Buck Rogers*, *The Leopard Man*, and even *Billy The Kid Trapped*. In most of his early films, his wardrobe consisted of a loincloth. No other actor has played so many different comic book heroes.

Rock Hudson, Chuck Connors, and Jeff Chandler played indians. Richard Harris became *The Man Called Horse* and showed his backside. Later, Charlton Heston leaped about semi-nude in *Planet of the Apes* and other films.

Several actors played seamen, to the delight of uniform-conscious gays. Errol Flynn was in *Sea Hawk*. Alan Ladd got whipped and other things in *Two Years Before the Mast*, but pal Brian Donlevy consoled him. Terance Stamp took on the role of innocent *Billy Budd*. Clark Gable and Franchot Tone bared their chests in *Mutiny on the Bounty*, later remade with Marlon Brando. And Burt Lancaster, who had a memorable beach love scene in *From Here to Eternity*, spent much time in *The Swimmer* (1968) in swim trunks. John Kerr, who attracted attention in *Tea and Sympathy*, played a lovesick sailor in *South Pacific*. Guy Madison debuted as a sailor in *Since You Went Away* and caused enough of a sensation to win co-starring roles quickly. More recently, Jack Nicholson played a sailor in *The Last Detail*

and James Caan did likewise in *Cinderella Liberty*.

Perhaps the most significant film of the '60s was *Midnight Cowboy*, which won the Oscar for best movie of 1969. Beautifully acted by Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight, the film told of the unlikely friendship between a con artist and a male hustler. It showed scenes of Voight taking a shower, being buggered by his hometown peer group, and getting head by a gay student in a movie theater. In addition to winning its well-deserved Oscar, it opened the door to less inhibited films in the '70's.

Jon Voight himself went on to play a boxer in *The All-American Boy* and to take a canoe ride with Burt Reynolds in *Deliverance*. Dustin Hoffman showed his backside in *Marathon Man*, and director John Schlesinger crossed the pond to direct *Sunday, Bloody Sunday* (1971). In this, Murray Head had love scenes with both Glenda Jackson and Peter Finch, but nobody came. Along with many other movie-goers, I missed the film, but those who did see it said it was "bloody awful".

Nonetheless, the attitude in films during the '70s has been definitely more open if not exactly at the "anything goes" stage. (Prior to *Midnight Cowboy*, only Andy Warhol and his director Paul Morrissey had explored the world of the male hustler. Usually Joe Dallesandro played the easy-going stud. Oddly enough, Warhol's superstars Viva, (continued on page 60)

FILM:

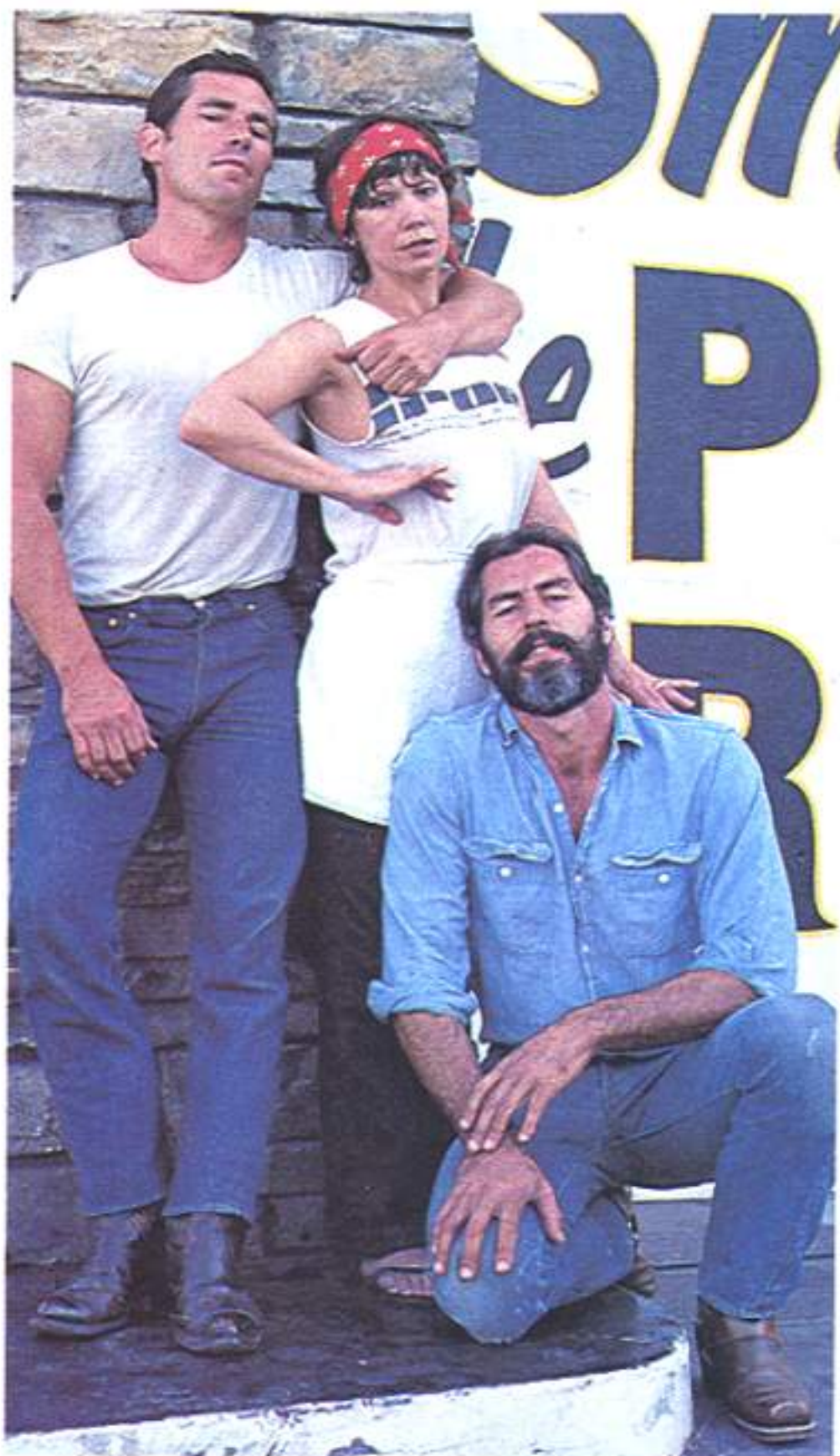
A Gay Odyssey

There is a strong trend in gay movies today to make them not only more interesting and more cohesive, but to cross the line into the profitable world of "respectable" film. **IN TOUCH** takes an inside look at one such attempt.

by Donald Warman

photos by Richard Lyle

The filming of any movie requires the cooperative talents of many people. Below (l.), Fred Halsted, Georgina Spelvin, and Richard Locke prepare for the first day's shooting, as cast and crew set up (r.) for a scene. The hunky cast includes Mike Morris (p.25, 1.) and Guillermo Ricardo (Jaime de la Costa), who was featured in **IN TOUCH** #26.



A chilly hour before the dawn of what would be a hot September day, a group of strikingly good-looking, good-natured young show biz people began converging on a friendly, tacky gay bar on inner Sunset Boulevard, barely a mile from downtown Los Angeles. The men favored western shirts, jeans and boots; some of the half-dozen girls had chosen funky blouses and ankle-length skirts such as ladies used to wear in Randolph Scott shitkickers. Ungodly early as it was, and at such a remove from their usual Hollywood area haunts, they were arriving to film a major scene for a professionally prepared, well-publicized gay porno film. For various reasons, the two dozen cast and crew members who would be assembled and ready for work by 7 o'clock were upbeat about the morning ahead.

The job that brought them together was *El Paso Wrecking Corp.*,

an ambitious and seriously thought out project its originators and financial backers hoped would help them cross the barriers traditionally segregating outright hard-core from the general, "legitimate" entertainment market in which all present were involved — or hoped to become involved. Some of the guys — acting students, office workers, go-go boys, models, theatrical hopefuls — came for the \$20 or so each would be paid to live it up as patrons of a truck route barbecue-and-beer joint, which the friendly bar had been rented to represent that morning.

Early arrivals on the set were *El Paso's* two male stars, gay porn veterans Richard Locke and Fred Halsted. They play Hank and Gene, longtime trucker buddies who enjoy an easy-going, honest friendship marked by their willingness to accept each other's habit of making it sexually with juicy young studs they meet along the road. Locke

and Halsted had never met until the previous evening, when a preliminary character-building scene was shot in the Laurel Canyon home of Joe Gage, a former porn actor himself who had written and was directing *El Paso*, as he had its predecessor, the sensationally successful and well-regarded *Kansas City Trucking Co.* Locke had expressed reservations about teaming with Halsted, whose porn flick image had been that of the relentlessly sadistic macho sex brute. (Halsted's blatant S&M feaures of recent years had caused him, and the gay porn industry, some grief.) But by morning, the two had arrived at the warm camaraderie essential to *El Paso's* credibility. They emanated genuine good feeling for each other and their co-workers.

Indeed, the whole company was characterized by good will. Besides the kids who showed up for kicks and the cash, there were others who



simply wanted to be part of Joe Gage's picture because they liked him and his producer/partner, Sam Gage. The two are related only by friendship and a desire to get out an artistically superior, money-making piece of gay erotica; neither is actually named Gage. The feeling around the set was that the pseudonymous partners did a good thing with *Kansas City* and that, if lightning struck again with *El Paso*, there would be more work and more good times for performers like themselves.

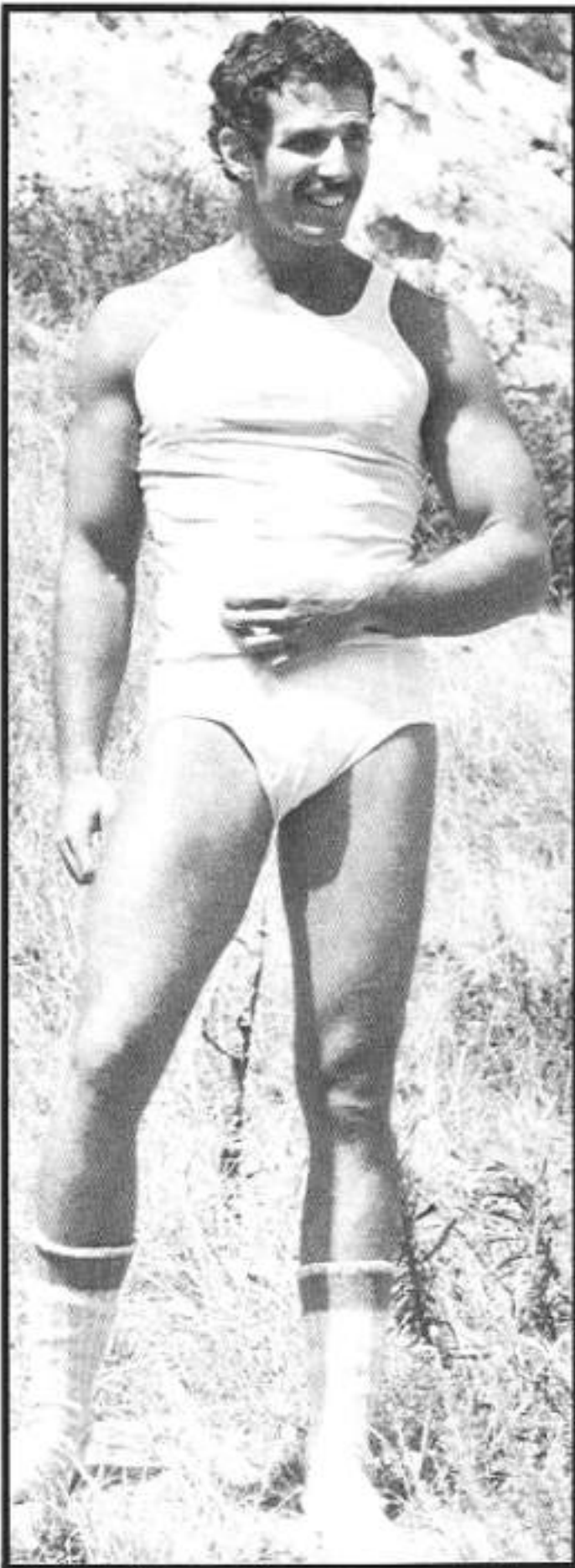
First to arrive at the bar was Sam Gage himself. He is a slim, bearded, energetic young man of 29 who explored careers in rock-'n'-roll promotion and theater work before going to Hollywood. While deferring to Joe Gage, who is 33, in casting and direction, Sam was invaluable to the project in that he carried "the whole concept" — filming logistics, advertising and distribution problems — in his head. This morning, he carried cash in his briefcase. The extras — "atmosphere people" — hired only for the morning's work were paid off before they left the scene.

Joe Gage, too, got there early, in a van carrying the production's camera and sound equipment, as well as empty beer bottles to be filled with water for those who would imbibe at the bar during the sequence ahead. In fact, only one cast member, Stan Braddock, as the homophobic slob who is the plot's villain, was encouraged to drink the real thing: his role required him to emit a disdainful burp at a crucial point. Braddock was to spend the early hours priming himself with seltzer water for his big moment. But he couldn't manage it; the burp was inserted into the sound track later.

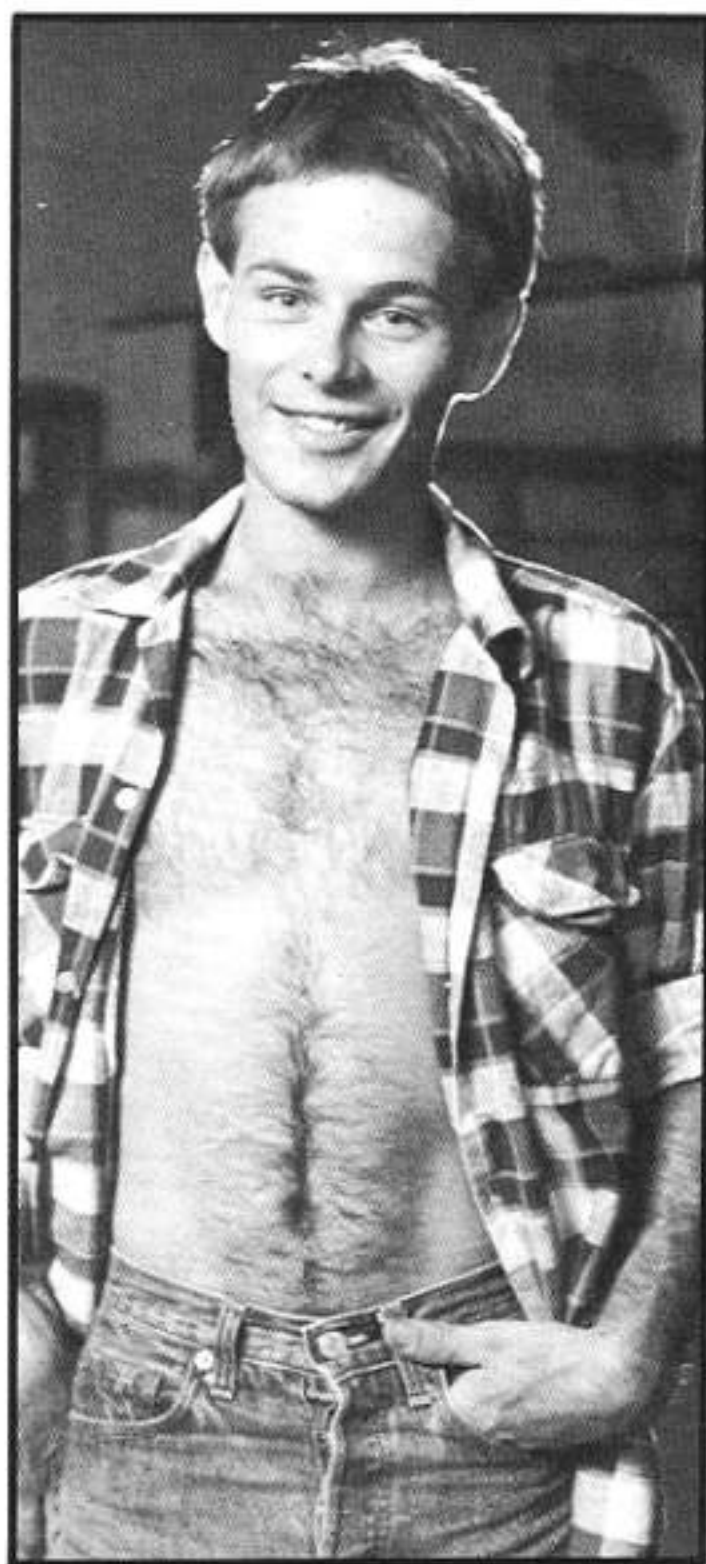
Another personality got there early, and was admiringly greeted by those who knew her name and her specialized fame. She was Georgina Spelvin, a tiny (barely 5 feet) and physically unbeautiful lady of 42 who had knocked around southern California for years "cleaning fish, sorting avocados and setting type" before she established herself in San Diego as a dancing teacher. She got into the straight porn field "the same way these kids got here today" and became a celebrity with a sleazo special called *The Devil in Miss Jones*. "It raised me from obscurity to poverty," cracked Ms. Spelvin, whose real-life image is that of an affectionate, hip mother figure. (In fact, her first grandchild is nearly two years old.)

Her non-porn role in *El Paso* was that of the barbecue joint's bartender, a knowing confidante of the trucker buddies, Hank and Gene. Between takes, she perched on a barstool, knitting "granny squares" — patches for an afghan in progress — while she discussed her recent free-lance work as a film cutter. "I was an underling to Orson Welles," she told a bemused admirer, going no further on that intriguing subject. What led her to lend her prestigious X-rated name to *El Paso*, a half-day's work for her? "I appreciate the \$200 the Gages gave me," she explained. "But I'd have done it for nothing. I like the fellows, and we all try to help each other when we can."

By 8 o'clock, the increasingly businesslike activities of the cameraman, the sound man, a ubiquitous production assistant known only as Howard, and some swift moves to put lighting and reflector equip-



Clay Russell is one of *El Paso*'s many studs.



Jerod Benson plays Seth, the boss's son.

ment in place signalled that filming was to begin. Another cast lady, a San Francisco actress who would be known to *El Paso* audiences as Jeanne Marie Marchaud, put an arm around Georgina. Indicating the bar's women's room, she asked, "You need a place to put on your makeup?" Ms. Spelvin replied, "My makeup is on. Where's the action?" Whereas the men in the scene had been taken aside to be touched up with glycerine and Max Factor, she was playing it cool. She went behind the bar, positioned herself on a beer case, and got ready to convulse her colleagues with some professional scene-stealing.

The action at the bar would occupy perhaps five minutes of screen time, and it was important for several reasons. The plot situation was this:

Hank and Gene, the platonic trucker pals, have escaped the Kansas City Trucking Co. in haste after a boozy episode in which shots were fired around the office. En route to a job prospect in El Paso, they drop in at Billie's (Georgina's) place, where they encounter Ox, a crude bastard who doesn't like gays and doesn't know what kind of a bar

he's in. Gene (Halsted), the more impetuous of the team, sights Jeanne Marie and Steve King, a young hetero couple looking for some far-out action. He invites the pair into the basement, where the girl lifts her skirt and masturbates watching her boyfriend make it with Gene. All three come enthusiastically.

Upstairs, two young studs, Wayne and Jim, have silently watched the trio leave and are drawing their highly sexed-up conclusions. Ox, too, senses something fishy in the wind. "That guy a faggot?" he asks Billie. Gene, back from the basement, hears the insult; so does Hank. The battle is joined. Gene, although established as a sweet-natured guy and freshly drained of semen to boot, hurls Ox through a window. The crowd raucously cheers Gene on, ad-libbing sentiments like "Kill 'im" and "Fuck Anita Bryant!"

In the excitement, Jim and Wayne go to their car, shyly confess their horny frustration, then unzip their jeans and jack themselves off, as guys will do.

Not all of this was filmed at the bar, of course. Certainly not Stan Braddock's dive through the window, a spectacular leap (through sugar glass) which landed him on a mattress two feet beneath camera range. And certainly not the basement three-way (if the voyeuristic girl could be considered a third) nor the boys' JO duet. Sex scenes, on a Gage film, require "controlled conditions," meaning that nobody other than the director, cameraman and lighting technician are present to watch the performers' erotic exertions. Belief is widespread in the porn industry — and just as widely denied by many intimately involved — that outsiders distract and embarrass actors who must bring themselves and each other to visible, gasping, sweating orgasms. Richard Locke, a remarkably introspective, intellectual man of 36 who has made a dozen gay flicks in the past three years, told an interviewer that voyeurs on the set don't bother him. Another *El Paso* performer, a novice in the porn field, told a friend after his first sexual exposure before the camera: "I got myself so psyched up for my blowjob scene that when I took that dick in my mouth, I didn't care who was watching, or even where I was."

Earlier, when the Gages were interviewing candidates for *El Paso*, Sam Gage remarked to an interested observer: "People who get into this field as a medium are on an 8-millimeter fantasy trip. It's exhibition-

ism, sure. But it's more than that. They want to be recorded on film, to look at themselves." Nevertheless, it's a matter of professionalism with the Gages to keep the hardcore filming private. And, indeed, every aspect of their work is marked by a scrupulously detached professional air. The Gages aren't in it — they don't find it within themselves, one suspects — to exploit or even embarrass their actors. Acting is a reputable trade whose practitioners are entitled to their personal dignity.

At the Sunset Boulevard bar location, the morning's filming was about over. Georgina Spelvin, as the barlady who knew what went on downstairs and was tolerant of it, has jokingly dominated every shot in which she appeared. The stars, Locke and Halsted, visibly enjoyed her camping. So did director Joe Gage, who insisted only that she stick to his script, which she did, reading it aloud between takes.

By this time in the morning — it was nearly 10, when the bar would open for its regular trade — there was evidence of tension. Halsted and Locke, who had been letter-perfect earlier, were fluffing their lines under Joe Gage's quiet but firm requests to "do it again." Gage, a meticulous craftsman, was retaking routine shots because of such details as poor lighting angles, or a missed beat in the actors' speech rhythms. Braddock, who did everything else right and with professional aplomb, failed again and again at his burp. Sam Gage was passing among the "atmosphere people," who sat or stood now around the bar tables, handing out model-release forms for still photo publicity, cautioning: "Please sign this before I can pay you." Everybody signed and got a pay envelope, but nobody wanted to leave. Their parts were over, but the scene wasn't done.

(continued on page 68)



Fred Halsted gives Jerod Benson a lesson in seduction near *El Paso*'s end.

DON AMECHE

by Steve Warren

It's been quite a few years since he played Alexander Graham Bell, but one of Hollywood's most durable stars is still on the line on the dinner-theater circuit.



Don Ameche and Alice Faye co-starred in the popular *Alexander's Ragtime Band*.

In person, Don Ameche is laid-back and as affable as his name (actually *Amici*, Italian for "friends"); on stage he displays an incredible energy that belies his age — 69.

He is also surprisingly free of the sort of ego that gets a death grip on most actors the first time they look back at themselves from a theater screen.

"I was never one of the great motion picture stars," Ameche told *IN TOUCH*. "It was always a chore to watch myself on the screen." He made at least 34 films for 20th Century-Fox between 1936-44.

"In those days," he says, "star quality was either there or it wasn't." He goes on to explain his — hardly original — theory that there were two kinds of stars, "the personalities and the good actors." He gives more examples in the former category than the latter, counts Humphrey Bogart in both and himself in neither.

What about the late Tyrone Power, with whom he appeared in *Ladies in Love*, *Love is News*, *In Old Chicago* and *Alexander's Ragtime Band*? "I'm afraid he was more of a personality," Ameche says. "He wanted to be a great actor in the worst way — toured in *John Brown's Body* and did *The Lady's Not for Burning*..."

"I was very close to Ty; I liked him a great deal. I was best man at his wedding — the first one, to Annabella."

Asked about his own place in entertainment history, Ameche doesn't seem to think he even deserves a footnote. He suggests that he might fall "in the same category as Fred MacMurray — before he did *My Three Sons*."

What passed for movie acting in his day, Ameche says, was a lot easier than what's required of actors today. The reason he was able to make four to six pictures a year is that "there weren't many scripts that came along where you had to get involved with your character. When I did (*The Story of*) *Alexander Graham Bell*, I did some research about the man; but it was easy because Bell's daughter was on the set all the time and I could ask her anything I needed to know.

"But in *Love is News*, for example, I played a newspaper editor. That was just a matter of using my imagination and doing what I thought an editor would do." There was, he admits, a lot more reliance on stereotypes in those days.

"The trend toward more depth," Ameche feels, "started with Rossel-

lini in *Open City* and deSica in *The Bicycle Thief*. Today we see things like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* that require tremendous preparation of an actor."

Another example he cites is Jill Clayburgh's performance in the movie-for-TV, *Hustling*. But he uses another television movie, *The Count of Monte Cristo* with Richard Chamberlain, to illustrate how things used to be: "I liked it very much, but you don't have to get involved — there's just so much an actor can do in a part like that."

Although his role as the inventor of the telephone is the one he's best known for, Ameche's personal favorite of his films is *Heaven Can Wait*, because it was directed by Ernst Lubitsch. He calls the director "a real perfectionist; he and Sam Raphaelson, who wrote the script, polished it for nine months before he would start shooting."

The only other director he worked for whom Ameche considers above the ordinary was Henry King, who made *Ramona*, *In Old Chicago* and *Alexander's Ragtime Band*.

Heaven Can Wait was Ameche's only collaboration with Lubitsch; another of the director's films, *Ninotchka*, was the source of the musical, *Silk Stockings*, in which he made his Broadway debut in 1954.

The other shows Ameche has done in New York have been less successful, but the actor says he was a prime candidate for the lead in *The Music Man*, which went instead to Robert Preston. He thought he had an inside track for the show, having been friends with the playwright/composer, Meredith Willson, since his radio days in the 1930's: "Willson used to be the piccolo player in our studio orchestra."

Among the many radio shows Ameche was heard on, one of the best remembered — and certainly the most readily available on record — is *The Chase and Sanborn Hour*, on which W.C. Fields had his famous running feud with Charlie McCarthy. Ameche played Ed McMahon to Fields' Johnny Carson.

"I never thought of it in quite that way," he says now, "but I guess I was. I did a little more than (McMahon) does, though. I did a 12- or 15-minute bit with the guest star each week — a dramatic thing or musical number — and I always had a song."

The programs often sounded spontaneous, but Ameche says they were really tightly scripted: "The only time we went off was when Fields would really get vehement in delivering a line to McCarthy and

forget where he was. I'd have to shake him and point to his place in the script. . . . He was a character, that Fields."

Our conversation reveals something I'd never known — it was radio work that started Edgar Bergen moving his lips in his ventriloquism act. "He did it for clarity," Ameche says. "It didn't matter on radio because the people in the studio who could see him were all part of the show; so they advised him to do it to improve his diction. When he started in radio he didn't move his lips at all; but after that, he did it all the time."

"He was a very shy man, Edgar Bergen. If you saw him without that dummy, he wouldn't say anything at all; but with it . . ."

Another of Fields' cohorts draws Ameche's sympathy — John Barrymore: "He was so cruel to him-



self. . . . He must have been a very lonely man. I met him at NBC just two or three weeks before he died. He started talking and must have gone on for at least 45 minutes."

Ameche describes himself as "a loner, and getting more and more so all the time." He and his wife of 45 years live in Santa Monica. They've raised six children ("four of my own and two adopted") all of whom are grown up and "going their diverse ways now." None of the six is in show business, although their father swears he didn't influence their career decisions.

The actor won't be drawn into discussion on gay issues. "I think I'm better off staying out of all that," he says. "I've been exposed to a lot of them in my career, but

they've never interfered with me and I've never interfered with them . . ."

"I don't know that I've ever played a love scene opposite a lesbian," he says in answer to another question. "Those things were all pretty well hushed up back then, not like today." But wasn't it common knowledge within the industry who was and who wasn't? "Maybe I missed it all," Ameche says naively.

In 1970 Ameche made two movies, his last to date. Neither *Suppose They Gave a War and Nobody Came?* nor Disney's recently re-issued *The Boatniks* was very successful. Of the former he says, "I think the Army botched that up" by making the producers soften the satire.

Should another film offer come along, Ameche's ready: "I'd like to see if I could make myself do it the way I think I should. I'd like one more chance." He'd like another crack at the Broadway stage, too, "if I could get a short enough contract or just work a 5-day week."

Most of Ameche's work the past few years has been on the dinner-theater circuit. He spent about half of 1977 touring in an inconsequential play, *Never Get Smart With An Angel*, in which he was cast as an Italian version of Archie Bunker. On stage almost constantly, the star moved at a pace a chorus boy would envy.

"I think it's probably a god-given thing," he says of his energy. "I take good care of myself, but I don't have any particular secrets." As to what he eats, "My diet is based mostly on my weight — no, it isn't really; I try to eat things I think are good for me."

For a wise man, Ameche admits to having made his share of mistakes in life. "I was offered five percent of *Oklahoma!* two weeks before it opened," he says, "and I turned it down. Oscar Hammerstein was a good friend of mine — what a loveable man he was; but hell, he hadn't had a hit in ten years!"

Another whopper he recalls is passing up the lead in the TV series, *Green Acres*, because someone advised him wrongly to hold out for a larger percentage of the program. It ran several years with Eddie Albert in the role Ameche rejected.

But the man is content: "I have all the money I need. I'm not a very rich man, but my tastes are simple and I have enough to live comfortably."

That's Don Ameche: happy and amichevole (friendly).

"Sincere, discreet...."

fiction by William Rogers

The BEST Enjoy

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Erection

Dragging home late from an uninspiring day of inspiring teaching, I discovered in my mailbox one of those "plain brown" envelopes which set our pulses racing so gaily. Ripping it open, I found the current issue of *Gaffer's Gay Pen Pal Club*. There it was! Filled with goodies available for a postage stamp and a buck. Excitedly I grabbed a drink and sat down to peruse the offerings.

There among the ads from studs ("Bright, young, hot, uncut") from California ("virile but versatile") to New York ("masculine and gentle"), was a veritable gem from Capital City in my own surprised state:

WELL-EDUCATED, ATTRACTIVE, SINCERE, SOPHISTICATED W/M, 39 yrs. 6', 152 lbs., dark hair, hazel eyes, wants to be with sincere, slim, educated guys up to 38 for intimate talks and body contact. Into movies, photography, music (classical and rock), books. Well-endowed and willing to share with anyone sincere. Please write; no fats, fems, B, S/M. Like beards. Discretion required. P.O. Box 721, Capital City.

Even though I did not quite qualify on all the requirements (W/M, 39 yrs., 5' 10½", plump, modestly endowed, hates rock, never reads anything more serious than "Little Orphan Annie," but sincere. Definitely SINCERE. And discreet. In our state, discretion is an absolute fetish), I grabbed a pen and wrote a lengthy, sincere, discreet letter using my very best handwriting and describing myself as truthfully as I thought I dared.

Since I planned to be in Capital City the following Sunday, I suggested that we might arrange a rendezvous before or *apres* a meeting which I was to attend. If he was interested, he was to call me collect and identify himself as "Gaffer." I signed my letter "Charles," a nice name, and one which I would have chosen for myself.

Feeling rather uneasily that I might be blowing my cover to the Vice Squad, I mailed my sincere, discreet letter and waited for an answer.

Two days later I was roused from a semi-comatose state in front of the television by the jangle of the telephone. "Will you accept a collect call from Gaffer?" the operator asked, jolting me into alertness.

"Yes!" I shouted breathlessly, hoping that my panting could not be heard over the telephone.

"Charles?" Gaffer spoke in a pleasant voice with a slight accent. French, perhaps? French! (Hoo ha!)

"Yes," I gasped.

"Uh — have you been running?"

"No. Yes! Yes, I had to dash to the phone from the back of the house." He'd probably think I lived in Twelve Oaks from that statement.

During our conversation, he said: "I can tell from your speech that you are not from this state." How could he tell that? Perhaps because I still retain the *-ing* endings? Or did I sound as if I'd slithered from a swamp?

"No, I'm not, and I can tell that you're not, either" (giggle, pant). "Are you — French?"

"No. Greek. But I've lived here quite some time." Greek! Now we're getting somewhere!

We arranged a rendezvous following my meeting. We were to meet in the main lounge off the foyer of the Capital City Art Center. I was to send Gaffer a photograph of myself so he could recognize me. I explained to him that my hair would be different because I'd had it curled. A note of doubt crept into Gaffer's voice: "Is it way out or low?"

"Oh, that depends upon what I've been doing" (simper) "and where I've been, but I try to keep it low."

"Do you know what you'll be wearing? We must be discreet, you know." How well I know! Did he think I'd show up in a mauve boa and mesh hose? After all, I planned to wear just a touch of eye shadow and no makeup at all!

"I'll be wearing a denim outfit, probably, so look for me."

"Right." He promised to be there and hung up. Only then did I realize that he would know just what I looked like, and I would not know him from Adam. Was I making a sitting duck of myself? Should I really go ahead and send that photograph? Would it be sent out to all local police stations on a wanted poster? Would Anita Bryant place it in the center of her dart board and throw oranges at it?

Flinging caution to the winds, I scribbled a quick note expressing my eagerness to meet Gaffer, placed it in an envelope with a photograph of myself in my Colonel Sanders outfit, and pedaled off to the neighborhood mailbox.

Two days later, I received a typed note from Gaffer. It was in one of those "privacy" envelopes which are printed blue inside, and it was typed on an electric typewriter. This guy was taking no chances. He probably handled the thing with gloves. He repeated his warning about discretion and said that he, too, was looking forward

to meeting me. That, at least, was a note of encouragement.

Sunday afternoon was hardly tolerable. The meeting dragged on and on, but at 4:20 I was making a dash across the Art Center parking lot, expecting to be converged upon at any moment by all the plain-clothesmen in the city. Naturally, a slight rain had developed, and my hair, which I'd arranged so carefully over the bald spot, hung like pine shavings around my forehead. Still feeling as if I would be arrested momentarily, I flung open the large center door.

I reeled back, struck by the almost physical force of an absolute barrage of noise! A sea of female humanity filled the main foyer from wall to wall. Judging from their sizes and shapes, all the fat women in the state must have gathered there for a reception to celebrate the burning of the local chapter of Weight Watchers. Enormous, bosomy women eddied around a punch bowl, shrieking and lunging into each other with great clashing of diamonds. The only other men in the hall were two rather frightened-looking guards at the head of the stairs to the main gallery. I could not have been more obvious.

Struggling through the elephants gathered at the water hole, I made my way to the restrooms, where I mopped at my hair with wads of toilet tissue. Perhaps if I wound tissue around my head I could fake a head wound.

Naturally, there was no Well-Educated, Attractive, Sincere, Sophisticated W/M in the main lounge, so I peeked into the main gallery before attempting to strike a dramatic pose beside a rather wilted aspidistra on the landing. All I needed was a bunch of grapes and a shield.

Below me, the hippos eddied around the water hole, but no other man was in sight.

Following our dry meeting, the sight of punch made me terribly thirsty, so I struggled through the crush to a pair of water fountains against one wall. You've seen those fountains, I'm sure — a tall one for adults and a short one for children. Bending over in that colossal mob was not easy, but I did manage to get a few sips, bringing myself hip-to-monumental-hip with some very large lady in an enormous pink hat. She turned and froze me with, "Excuse me!" Just as I turned around, she gave a shriek for some reason and stepped backward, causing me to sit in the children's fountain. Imagine the pain of an icy spigot

against your rear cleavage. Not at all pleasant! My knees were brought into intimate contact with her gigantic hips, and she turned with an icy, "Re-ah-lly, suh!"

Scrambling off my perch, I struggled to the restroom again to wring the water from my coattail. Perhaps I could stand with my back to the wall and flap my coattail until it dried.

Again taking my place beside the aspidistra, I surveyed the roiling masses below me. Gaffer had better be pretty terrific after all I'd already suffered.

Pretty terrific! Coming through the door was the most gorgeous creature I'd seen outside the pages of *IN TOUCH!* Tall and blond, he was wearing a white satin suit with a white silk shirt opened to the navel displaying a beautiful, hairless chest draped with enough gold coins to set up a Jewish bride for life. The European-cut trousers made it obvious that "well-endowed" was not nearly adequate. Our eyes locked. I turned to stone. He began to weave his way toward me, a majestic sailing ship amid a backwash of mud scows.

Reaching my side, he spoke. "Hey, Shorty, where's the john?"

"H-huh?"

"The john. The head. Where is it?"

"O-over there," I stammered, pointing.

"Thanks." He strolled off.

Waiting a discreet time, I reeled into the main lounge and sat beside a droopy fern clearly in view of the restroom door. I feared a heart attack. Would Gaffer mourn over my dead body? Or would he discreetly leave it for the sincere janitor to sweep out along with the crumpled dixie cups and napkins?

The restroom door opened, and the Satin One slinked out and back into the foyer without even a glance in my direction. Perhaps I really had turned into a stone? No, I could feel my wet coattail soaking through my trousers and my brand new bikini briefs. I closed my eyes and tried to compose myself. Actually, I tried to encourage that heart attack. Anything to get me out! Obviously Gaffer had looked me over and not liked what he saw. And after I'd splashed Brut so hopefully over my thighs and into my navel!

"Charles?" A sophisticated foreign voice said at my elbow.

Startled, I looked up — and then down. There beside me was a tiny, little man who looked for all the world like a benign Munchkin who

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For many gays, sex — whether it begins in the bars, baths or bushes — is nowadays more often than not a kind of ritual with chemicals as its sacraments. A sex session may begin with alcohol at the bar or on the patio, proceed to marijuana and reach a climax with a dozen snorts of amyl nitrite (poppers) in the bedroom. According to many users, drugs come in handy during sex. They destroy inhibitions. They loosen you up. They may cause a numbness or tingle in sensitive areas, which some gays want. They may alter all the senses at once, speed things up or slow them down.

But do drugs contribute anything to sexual performance? Or are they a universal down? That's a tough question, with almost as many answers as there are users. One person needs alcohol to meet other people, but a friend may feel that booze kills off the drive. One may find poppers help him loosen up anally and psychologically, while they may give his partner a headache. The reason there are no universal, medically recognized aphrodisiacs is not only because there are no chemicals that always react well with the sexual parts of the brain and body, but because sexual response is such a complex process — one which varies from person to person according to a score of physiological, muscular, psychological, and other variables. Every person has different buttons to push, and these vary according to the state of body, state of mind, time of day, etc. Different people are turned on by different things, and what pulls the trigger for one person may pull the plug for another.

But what about drugs that everyone thinks are sexy? One of the reasons why some things are called aphrodisiacs is suggestibility. If a product — say, poppers — is commonly used before sex, or if people *think* it is a sex stimulant, many people will try it and find out that it works. Public opinion is what makes the stuff effective. Most mail-order aphrodisiacs fall into this category. Doctors say these potions have little or no effect on the nervous system, but there are enough satisfied customers to keep the producers in business.

Drugs do affect sexual performance, however, and each drug does certain things to the mind and body that will make the user feel a little differently, whether he likes it or not. Some drugs will do things to the body that may make erection easier, while others deaden the com-

plex network of responses. Some will reduce anxiety and inhibition, but render the act pretty unimaginative, while others may open floodgates to fantasies never previously dreamt of. And though it depends on the individual whether the change will be a turn-on or turn-off, there are certain common, medically documented effects that the following drugs (listed alphabetically) have on sexual performance.

ALCOHOL: To slightly misquote Shakespeare, alcohol "taketh from the performance what it gives to the desire." And so, when alcohol enters the nervous system from the liver, where it is metabolized, it begins by depressing the control mechanisms of the higher areas of the brain, areas which control intellectual decisions, judgement, taste, etc. The result: you temporarily lose your inhibitions, anxieties, and feelings of guilt. You become tipsy and you let go. If you're shy, you become a talker. If you're restrained, you may cultivate fantasies. If you lack the courage to go after the man of your dreams, you go out and collar him. But your standards become lowered all the while, and you may well wake up in the morning and find a nightmare lying beside you.

Alcohol is a depressant. From the higher areas of your brain it seeps down until the whole sponge becomes thoroughly saturated. You lose all control, judgmental, intellectual, and muscular. You begin staggering. You lose emotional touch with things. It goes without saying that at each level of saturation, sexual performance gets worse. The loss of muscular control and reflexes make it harder to achieve erection and orgasm. The loss of skin sensitivity is likely to make the effort crude and uninteresting, and the overall depressant effect makes it harder to stay awake.

The relationship between alcohol and sexual performance thus depends entirely on the dosage. With many people, one or two drinks will not only put them in the mood, it will also allow the mood to enhance the performance. But add two or three more drinks, and whatever you have planned may well be washed out. All in all, you'll probably have better luck cruising an A.A. meeting, which is where you may belong, anyway.

AMPHETAMINES: Amphetamines are the "speed" drugs, and appear in the form of Biphentamine (black beauties), Dexedrine (Christmas trees), Preludin and brown powdered methedrine "crystal meth." They are a form of powdered lightning, both in terms of the jolt of energy they provide and the hidden dangers they offer. Powerful stimulants of the central nervous system, the speed drugs will give the user an enormous burst of energy, coupled with a sense of euphoria, a feeling that you're all-powerful and that all is right with the world. Every part of the body may feel charged, filled with potency from an unknown source, and the mind will be most highly charged. You feel more intelligent, more aware, more able to concentrate.

For a while, all the world is yours. But the more speed you take, the less mileage you get. Tolerance builds up and you find you have to run faster to stay in the same place. You lose appetite and sleep; a heavy speed freak may stay awake for ten days at a time. Needless to say, this high-voltage lifestyle is none too good for the mind or the body. Strange things may begin to happen to your head. You may become jumpy, a bit paranoid. The CIA may be peering through your window; ITT may be trying to control your thoughts by sending telepathic messages through its computer to steal your plan for bringing world peace by harboring the erotic energy inside the earth. Prolonged use of speed may be habit-forming, and coming down from speed may be as hard as coming down from heroin.

Speed has several effects on sex. It may increase your sex drive as part of the increase in overall energy. It may make your skin more



DRUGS

Photo by Charlie Airwaves

attuned to stimulation. But, alas, it may take a long time to get an erection and orgasm after you've achieved your high. But once you get there, orgasm may be a tremendous rush. Your fantasies are wilder and easier to visualize. You have fewer inhibitions. Perhaps the biggest drawback is that if both partners are on speed, they may never get down to having sex, preferring instead to settle down to a good 72-hour game of Monopoly. But sometimes they get so into each other that they spend the three days in bed, trying to get all the parts to function right. If that's your trip, fine. But better drive carefully and avoid the crash.

BARBITURATES: Barbiturates include such commonly used drugs as Seconal (reds), Nembutal (yellow jackets) and Tuinal, red and blue capsules that look like bullets and often have the same effect. Barbiturates are central nervous system depressants, meaning that they slow your brain down and your body along with it.

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... love'em or hate'em, they are a fact of gay life. Here's one writer's attempt, backed by research and medical opinion, to deal with the subject from the standpoint of fact rather than emotion.

by Thom Willenbacher



NEW ORLEANS:

a tourist's-eye view



St. Louis Cathedral dominates Jackson Square as it has from the days when New Orleans was, truly, a French city.

by Steve McElroy

New Orleans — home of Mardi Gras, Lady Marmalade, and beignets and coffee at Cafe du Monde. Each visit has its particular revelations and pleasures. In a fashion, I have done some growing up there and have experienced in its French quarter all I'll ever need know of debauchery. I've spent no more than two months of my life there, and yet feel drawn to it as if it were home. At this moment, I would gladly exchange my day-to-day life in cool, gray San Francisco for a mad, brief fling in New Orleans. It's a city whose sobriquet "The City that Care Forgot" is both enticement and warning, a call to glamor and to sleaze.

I have been to New Orleans in mid-summer, early fall, at Mardi Gras, but never in the spring, which, alas, I have been told, is the loveliest time of year. New Orleans is a fascinating, perhaps even somewhat dangerous, city for the gay man. It is hot — literally so in summer and early autumn, and metaphorically so in all seasons. The men are a handsome breed and are not coy about their needs. Their approach is usually direct and blunt: "Do you want to go home and fuck?" So if you're planning a visit to New Orleans (and I hope this writing will persuade you to such an adventure), take with you your faded torn levis, your t-shirts, your work boots and

white socks, and your toiletries — but leave the refined sensibilities safely packed away in the closet at home. If you enjoy playing tourist, New Orleans has much to offer, and your wardrobe will then of necessity consist of more than threadbare jeans and ripped jockey shorts; you'll need some suitable evening attire as well — even if you do end up picking up a friend at *Lafite's in Exile* (Bourbon and Dumaine), where it's so dark no one will notice what you're wearing anyway. Come prepared for glamor and trash. In any case, and with any kind of luck, the less you wear the happier you'll be.

Despite the almost unbearable



heat, summer in New Orleans can be quite enjoyable. There are fewer tourists to fend off, and something about those long hot days makes for a greater sexuality — boiling blood and all that. You might see an otherwise placid, respectable gay, taken by the summer heat, let himself get laid publicly on a pool table in a bar. And I suspect that only in summer in New Orleans would a stranger turn to you in a crowded bar and ask if you wanted to go to the bathroom with him for a little while to refresh yourself.

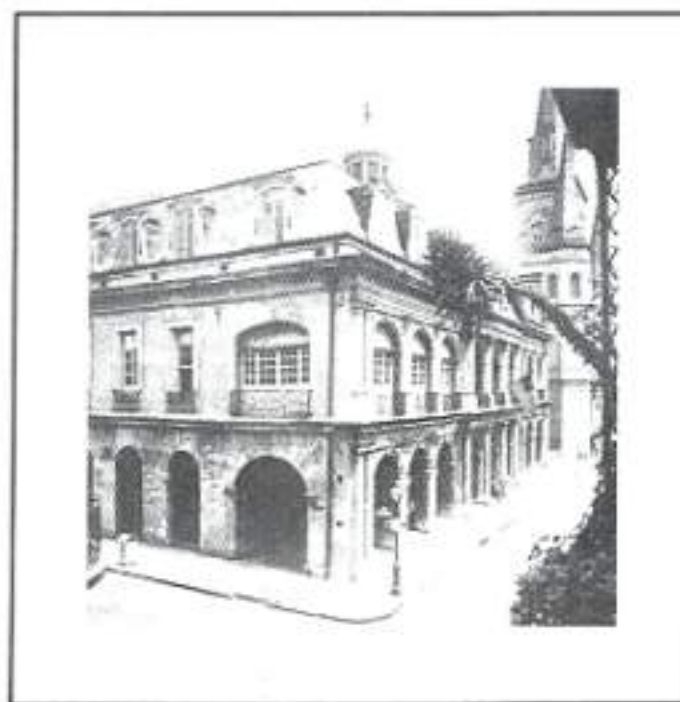
Mardi Gras is carnival and craziness in late winter — you might prefer it to the summer languor. I don't think any one season is "best" in New Orleans. Go when you *need* to, and the more familiar you become with New Orleans, the more quickly will you recognize the need to go there.

In deciding where you might like to stay, consult your pocketbook, your gay friends, and the advertisements in the gay rags. My only suggestion; stay in the French quarter. America (that part of New Orleans other than *le vieux carre*) is not so amendable to, or so blase about, the kind of trip I think you have in mind. You'll be grateful, too, for the convenience of a hostelry in the quarter. And you won't be questioned about any companions you may return with.

So you are dressed (up or down as is your want, your mood), you've settled into a convenient French quarter brothel (hostel, *hostel* — whatever could I have been thinking of?), and are ready to hit the streets. If you've been clever, you've picked up a map of the quarter from the garrulous limo driver who scooped you up at the airport and dropped you at your hotel, and you've familiarized yourself with the network of streets and allees of the quarter so that you won't get lost in the night. Not too lost, anyway.

You might begin your stay in New Orleans with a brief tour of the quarter. Since Bourbon Street remains the nerve center of life in the French quarter, you may want to start here in your explorations. Rue Bourbon is gaudy at any time. It's a bit tatty-looking, a bit dreary in the sunlight — like an old hooker (you've probably been waiting for that metaphor so I decided to let you have it) who has seen better

days, but gets up every morning with a glint in her eye and the thought that turning a few more tricks is necessary before she can retire to that ranch in Arizona, get



that facelift and bodylift she's needed for years.

So as you walk down Bourbon in the glare of the sun, remember that she'll look better at night when you're a bit bleary-eyed, too, and she has had time to put on her war paint. Go back after sunset when she begins to swing. You'll find the barkers out in force in front of the strip joints to urge you in. Occasionally one of them will open a door so you can see the action inside. If the club has nude male dancers, you may well want to go in, but admissions are often high and you'll be expected to drink. You'll find the porno shows and moviehouses on Bourbon, too, and the hookers and hustlers.

And the tourists — the gaga-eyed klutzes from Iowa scandalized

and secretly delighted by the debauched denizens of the quarter, as well as the more worldly-wise travelers who, unlike the Iowans, are in New Orleans to partake of the debauchery and not merely watch. Those who remain unimpressed with the gaudier aspects of Bourbon Street are nevertheless on the lookout for that fillip of degeneracy to whet jaded appetites. Perhaps a boots-and-leather act with a willing prostitute; a three-way with a boy — husband and wife quarreling in whispers over whom the sweet-faced child will fuck first. Fantasizing about the people you see on the street is a splendid activity. You may find it leads to rather more specialized fantasies involving yourself and an as-yet-faceless man who is going to brighten your stay in New Orleans.

When you tire of Bourbon Street and its rather sleazy character, you'll want to go to Rue Royale. Here you'll find the fabled elegance and charm of New Orleans — the New Orleans of wrought-iron and flowers, and small, dark shops vending antiques and dreams, silver and politesse. Eventually you'll find yourself funneled into Jackson Square near the Mississippi River. Visit it on a Sunday if you can, for then there are more street artists and derelicts to enliven the square. You may give in and hire a hansom for a ride around the quarter or buy a not-quite-professional etching of Saint Louis Cathedral, which overlooks the square. Finally, there is the river itself and the Moonwalk. Plan to see these in daylight *and* by moonlight, for it's only by visiting the river twice that you'll ever begin to understand its hold on the quarter, the city. It may be destroyer and creator, of peace, harmony, beauty.

If you are truly a tourist, given over to seeing all of note or fame in any city you visit, you'll go to one of the old cemeteries in New Orleans. Pick a sunny day for this so you can appreciate the contrast the sun and heat will offer to the coolness of the graveyards. The graves are all above ground; the land in the city is too marshy, shallow, wet to hold the dead. Visit Saint Louis #1 and #2 on Basin Street, see the tomb of Marie Leveau (voodoo queen of New Orleans), amble
(continued on page 96)

Nureyev, as Valentino, teaches fellow dancer Michael McDowell, as Nijinski, to tango in a popular scene from Rudi's first movie.



by Jeremy Hughes

A classical ballet dancer is, virtually by definition, the most narcissistic of artists. Exhaustively trained from a very early age, his formative years are passed in a mirrored prison where his own mimic-image is the focus of single-minded concentration. The state of his health, his muscles, tendons, ligaments, and bones, is a matter of unrelenting concern. And his most intense and time-consuming human contacts are with peers of like sensibilities (successful hosts never invite just *one* ballet dancer to a party).

For a decade and a half, now, the reigning symbol of this singular species has been Rudolf Nureyev,

he of the cruel cheekbones and wounded eyes whose on- (and off-) stage virtuositities have dominated the dance world since that fateful day in 1961 when, on tour in Paris with the Kirov Ballet Company, he flamboyantly rushed into the arms of gendarmes at Orly Airport declaiming "I won't go back!" In calm retrospect, he maintains that "I didn't come to the West to be a star. I came to dance *everything* — and I have."

Superstardom has been Nureyev's joyous burden since his debut at Covent Garden as guest artist with The Royal Ballet on February 21, 1962, partnering Margot Fonteyn as Albrecht in *Giselle* — "the most re-

warding and most difficult of all my parts." Despite the difference in their ages (Dame Margot — *nee* Peggy Hookham — is 19 years his senior), their immediate, "riveting" empathy has been the shared glory of their careers ever since. "Margot has influenced me more than anyone," he concedes today. "What she gave me was her vulnerability."

The word "vulnerability" seems odd on the tongue of one whose most pervasive image is a disciplined commingling of intellectual hauteur and physical bravura. Still, an examination of both his early roots and his current lifestyle reveal pregnable chinks in that armor of arrogance. He was born (1938) into the sub-

human poverty of a peasant family in Ufa, a Urals village only 250 miles south of the Siberian border. Of his childhood, two memories remain: "I was always hungry and cold" but, also, "I knew I *had* to dance."

Despite his father's disapproval, the young Rudi studied privately and danced with local amateur groups and the Ufa Opera Ballet. He entered the Leningrad Ballet School when he was 17, working under Alexander Pushkin (also mentor to Nureyev's present *bete noir*, Mikhail Baryshnikov — "my dancing still can give *him* a sleepless night"), and was accepted into the Kirov as a soloist in 1958 ("I was a star *before* I defected," he recently reminded the interviewer with some little defiance). Accumulating pressures, both professional and personal, led to that historic defection three years later.

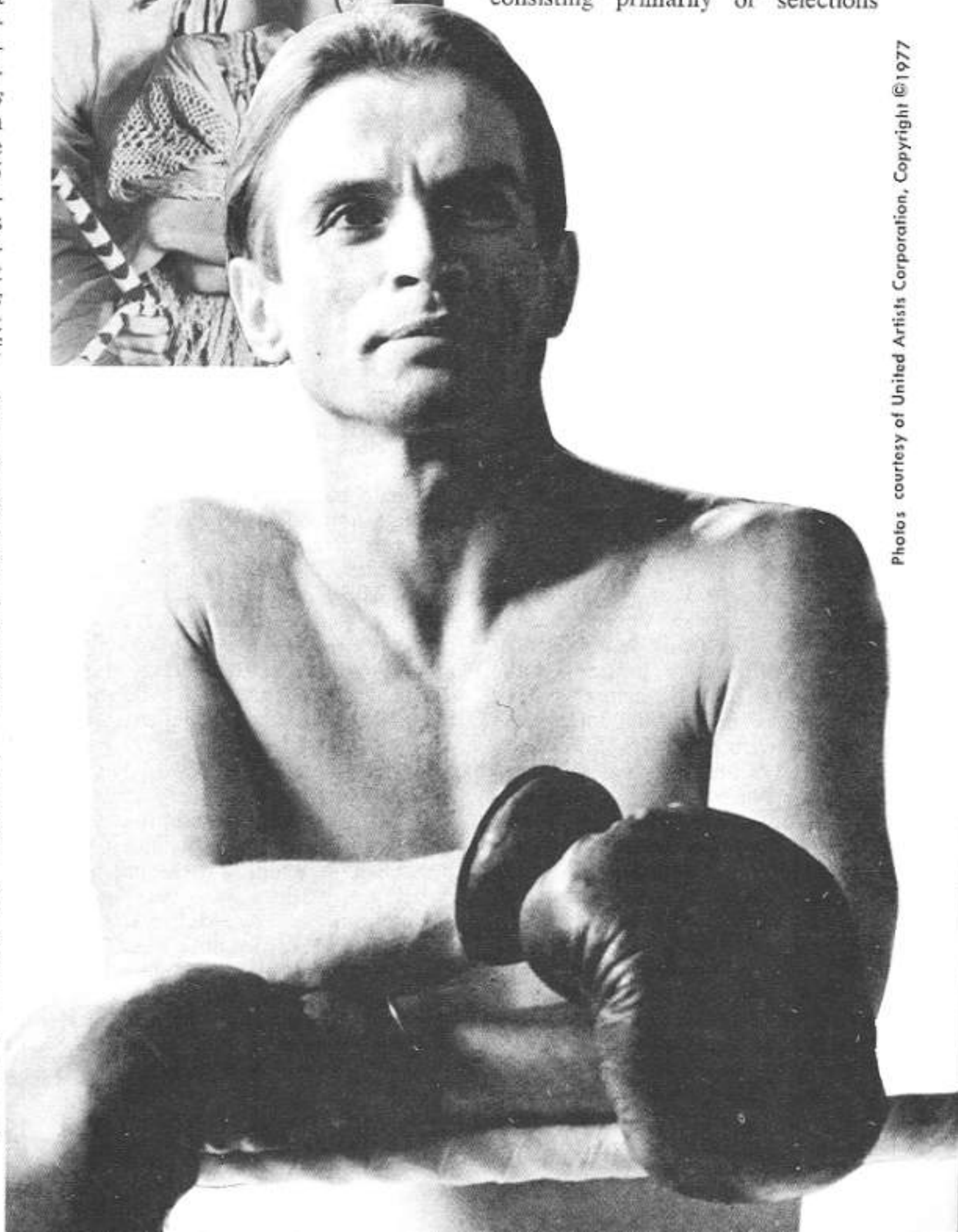
Universal acclaim at the Covent Garden debut led to Nureyev's becoming The Royal Ballet's "permanent guest artist" in 1963, dancing *Le Corsaire* pas de deux, *Les Sylphides*, *Swan Lake* (Siegfried in this production is his unfavorable role: "He sits on his ass for 35 minutes"), and *Marguerite and Armand*. (In London that year as European Correspondent for *Showbox*, this writer reported somewhat exuberantly, concerning a *Sylphides* caught on October 21st, "the perfect fluid precision of patrician Rudolf Nureyev.")

Audiences were wont to shower the stage with flowers, and bobby-soxers chanted: "We want Rudi, preferably in the nudi" — a desire, no one could have realized at the time, to be fulfilled in Richard Avedon's stunning *Vogue* spread in December, 1967 (in which a heavy-handed copywriter rhapsodized mistakenly about physical affinities with Michelangelo's nudes) and, even more revealingly, in Ken Russell's *Valentino* exactly ten years after that!

At the time of his defection, Nureyev had the equivalent of \$10 in his pocket. His fees now range from \$3,000 upwards to dance a repertoire extending from the standard classical/romantic (Ivanov, Taglioni, Petipa) through the modern jazzical/antic (Fokine, Taylor, Graham), branching out into his own choreography for both old and new works. Other terpsichorean defectors have not done nearly so well, as witness Panov and Makarova. Nureyev turns diplomat in discussing them, resorting to oblique reference to their having received "bad

advice" and encountering "difficulties." This particular area of discussion is summarily closed with a brusque "I hate intrigues."

Ordinary mortals would blanch at the ball-breaking daily schedule the masochistic marvel slavishly adheres to when on his regular performance schedule, which is most of the time (Guinness should make note of the fact that in June-July, 1976, the then 38-year-old man danced 48 performances in 47 days with three



different companies in the London Coliseum; and in a recent two-week engagement as guest star at L.A.'s Greek Theater, with The National Ballet of Canada, performed every single night); "When I stop for a few days," he laments, "it is terrible. I begin to worry. Can I still do it?"

At such times, Nureyev is up at 9 a.m. for his customary breakfast of hot tea (with milk, not cream) and buttered toast, then takes class, and rehearses up to six hours before a much-deserved late afternoon nap. Favored for dinner is a nearly raw sirloin steak, cheesecake doused with Grand Marnier, during all of which his consumption of water — drought be damned! — is awesome. In restaurants, he inevitably commands that the air conditioning be shut off.

With admirable foresight, he had hired a private tutor to teach him English when he first joined the Kirov — his reading assignments consisting primarily of selections

from Oscar Wilde. Now, his pleasantly-modulated voice emerges in what we would call "British" speech, delicately shaded with a Russian flavor. Backstage associates report with admiration his ability to be shockingly profane in several languages when he has worked himself up into what Dame Margot calls "a creative rage," but which Lincoln Kirstein excuses as "just the dark side of being Russian."

Flaunting convention is a hallmark of the Nureyev persona! He is addicted to high-heeled boots and floor-length coats — from mink to black leather — and well-nigh pioneered the wearing of a *capuche* (in the early days referred to inaccurately either as a "Vienna student hat" or a "Dutch-boy cap"). Characterizing himself as a "loner" and claiming that his personal relationships "are not the public's business," he is on record as ridiculing marriage: "What for?" he asks ambiguously. "To ruin some girl's life the way I live?"

To unwind after performances, Nureyev is prone to go to parties, nightclubs, or porn movies, and has been spotted (along with androgynous Bianca Jagger) by *Women's Wear Daily* "slumming" at New York's notoriously kinky gay after hours back-room orgy mecca, The Anvil. In her wretched roman a clef, *The Ulcers*, name-dropping venomist Joyce Haber at one point sets aside the forward lurches of her plot to ruminate on the *ne plus ultra* of superstar "'A' Personalities" at the summit of guest lists for Hollywood's most extravagant parties. "The roster was short," she wrote. "Sinatra. Kelly. Astaire. Nureyev . . ." Conspicuous by their absence are members of Nureyev's own less conventional set: Maggy and Jean Louis, Monique Van Vooren, male drag star Divine, Andy Warhol, and "Luigi" — Nureyev's masseur and "long-faithful aide de camp."

Sal Mineo, in his final interview (with this writer, for *IN TOUCH*, Issue 23), recalled "I had a party once when Nureyev came, when he was making his debut in L.A. And it was during the days when the Twist was so popular. And he was watching people twisting, and he finally called me to one side and he said 'Teach me what they are doing.' And I said 'You're putting me on! You want me to teach you how to dance?' And he said 'I want to learn how to do that!'"

"Well, the scene was that I took a towel" — Mineo demonstrated — "and it was about 20 minutes later, he was sort of off by himself in the

corner, practicing, and he walked out on the dance floor — this was out at the beach; hundreds of people were sitting on the walls watching — and he just went out into the middle of the floor and he started twisting as only Nureyev could!"

The more sobersided Ed Villella, Nureyev's All-American counterpart and nearest competitor, restricts letting his hair down to less public occasions. In the traditions of Ted Shawn and Barton Mumaw, 41-year-old Villella has worked rather self-consciously at "masculinizing"



the male ballet dancer image, even having sampled marriage. He once told this writer: "A male dancer is great when he has both an artistic and musical approach, is virile and exciting, and — most important — possesses *manly* grace. It takes a fine artistic balance to be a truly *male* dancer . . . you must find a delicate balance between over-athleticism and excessive elegance."

In recent performances — due to age? — Nureyev has been tempering his "athleticism" with intensity of characterization. He cannot help but be a commanding presence, embodying as he does an insistent aura of international jet-setting glamour, but perceptive critics have remarked upon a lack of "vitality and passion." There is no denying that the *jetes* do not soar to their former astonishing heights; the *grands battements* are muted in their incisiveness.

On second thought, perhaps it is not so much the advancing years as

it is the fragmentation of concentration. A minor but characteristic example occurred earlier this year when, after having limned such diverse figures as Jimmy Carter and Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jamie Wyeth spotted Nureyev at a dinner party and persuaded him to pose. "I wanted to paint him because his body is so perfect, and his face is so changeable," Wyeth *files* explained. "One minute he looks impish, the next minute he looks Slavic and haughty." (It is reported that the subject was far from passive, frequently prompting the young — 30 — artist to "Get that right!" and "Watch that foot!")

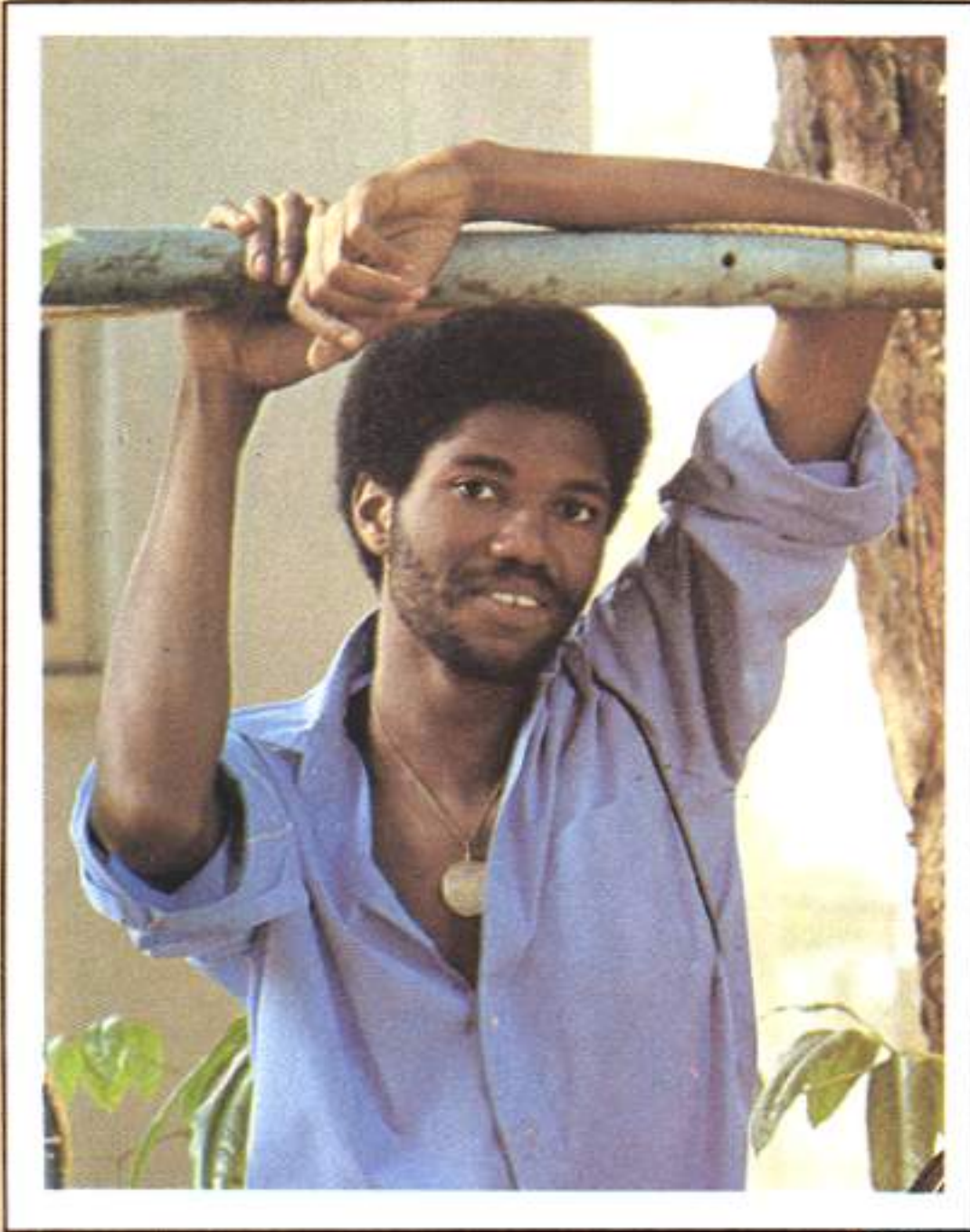
Still, Nureyev sees his life to date "as logical progression, from small town, to school, to the West, to the world." He views the recent enlarging of his horizons into films, playing Valentino in the stupefyingly tasteless Ken Russell movie, as an "interesting" experience, modifying that assessment, brown eyes twinkling, with an afterthought: "more interesting, perhaps, making the movie than seeing it. I learned a lot."

About the only thing audiences might "learn" from seeing it — if extremely alert during that celebrated nude seduction scene with Michelle Phillips — is that the basket which has ever been one of the major wonders of contemporary ballet might owe something to artifice as well as to nature (the ass, on the other hand, remains close to perfection). Otherwise, the acting itself is difficult to assess, filtered as it is through the temperament of one of our modern screen's most irresponsibly self-indulgent *auteurs*. Although the controversial issue of the protagonist's homosexuality is a central issue to the script, nothing is ever substantiated despite an early scene in which he "teaches" the tango to Nijinsky (former Royal Ballet colleague Anthony Dowell).

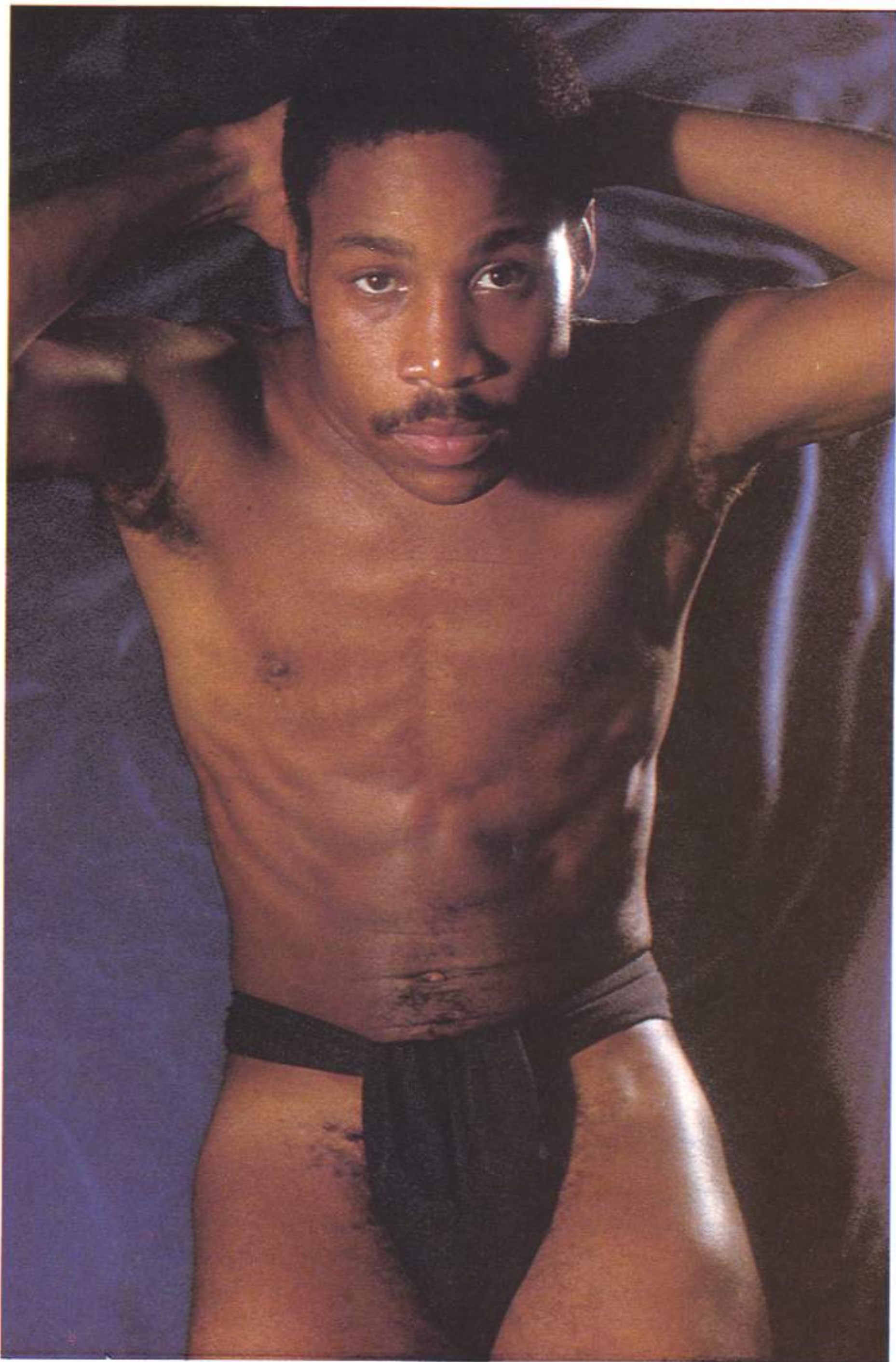
While such moments of dance in the film are minimal, Nureyev remains quintessentially a dancer, albeit one who is facing 40: "Being 39 is fine. It is a time when you enjoy dancing, when you drop out of competition. At this point, dancing becomes an art. Now I can start painting details. It is all less tense . . . Of course it isn't always easy. There are days when one wants to stop. Then there are days when one never wants to stop."

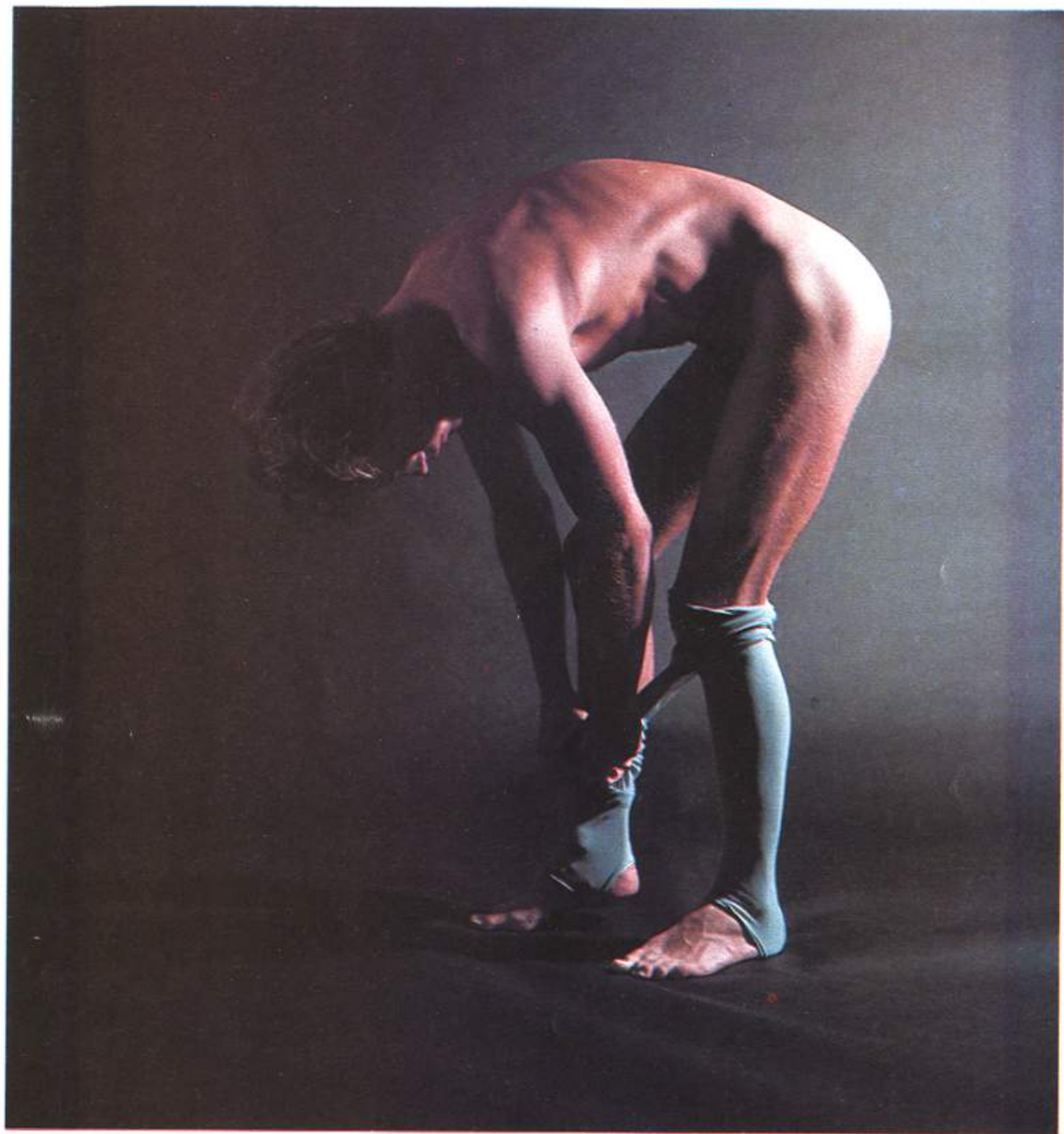
He brushes the unruly blondish locks away from his classic features and summarizes, in unconscious echo of that childhood memory: "I have to dance."

THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF JAMES WILLIAMS



"Men who are **men** love **men** — which may sound pretty sexist, but it's something I feel very deeply and try to convey in my photos." James Williams settles his lanky 6'6" frame back in his chair, a strange combination of intensity and calm. "I find this time extremely exciting for male photography," he continues. "Men have a natural sensuousness that women can never duplicate. The key, I think, is strength and gentleness. My art is meant to appeal especially to a certain kind of man — strong and gentle — and I try to capture those qualities in my photographs."

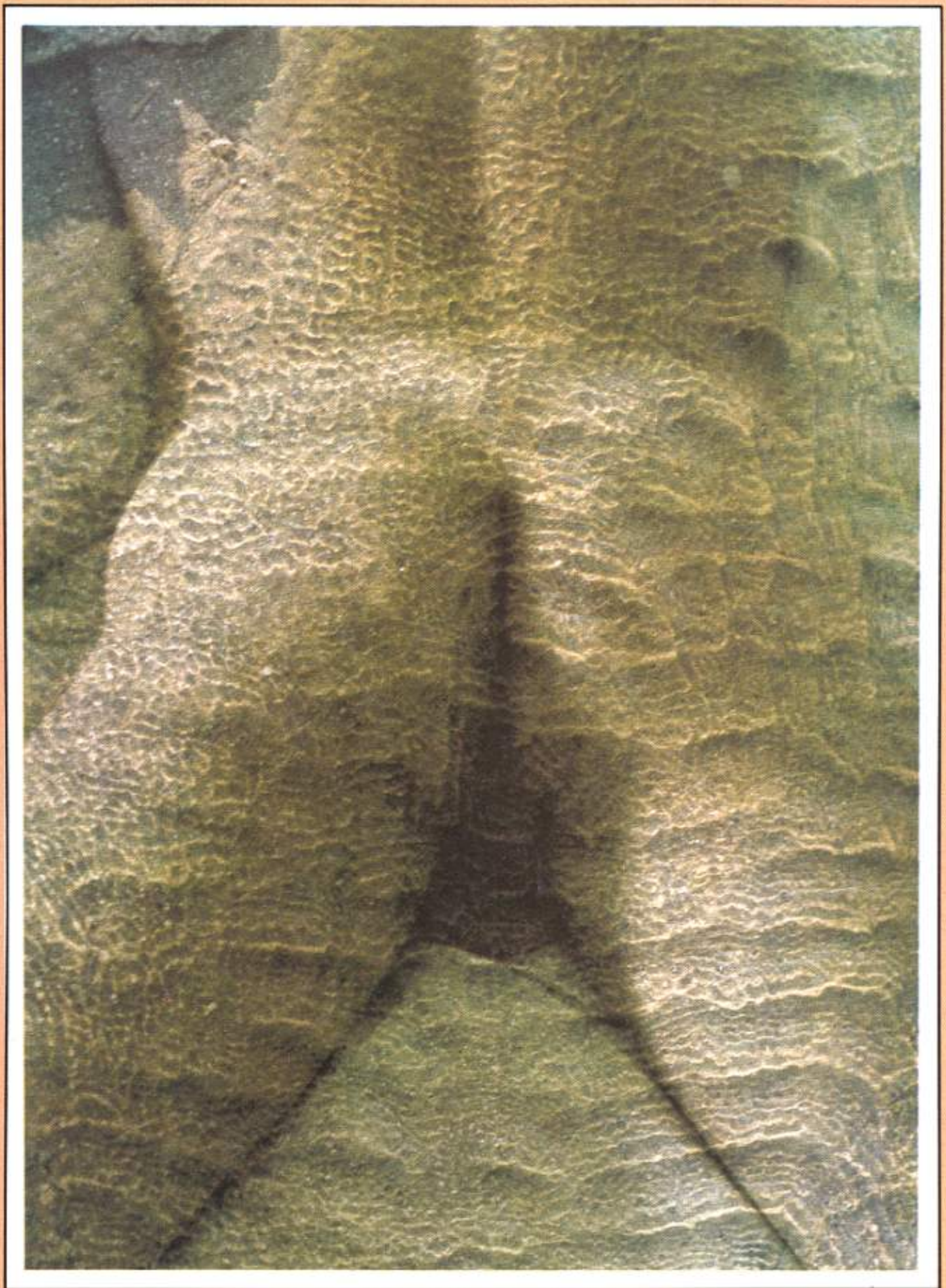




A native of Chicago, James moved to Los Angeles in 1971, and he received his photo training as a portrait photographer — a background that is apparent in his approach to any subject. He had his first print showing at the Professional Photographers West exhibit, and has shown at several galleries since.

A man of many talents, James has a love for graphic art, and designs and produces etched glass art in addition to his photography. Geometrics, deco, and southwest indian designs lend themselves to etched glass since they represent, to James, "a truly timeless means of expression."

"My secret desire," James says, grinning, "is to shoot a large billboard. No



advertisement; just the photo of twenty or so male faces crowded together, lips touching cheeks and brushing foreheads. The caption, of course, would read: Men who are **men** love **men**!"

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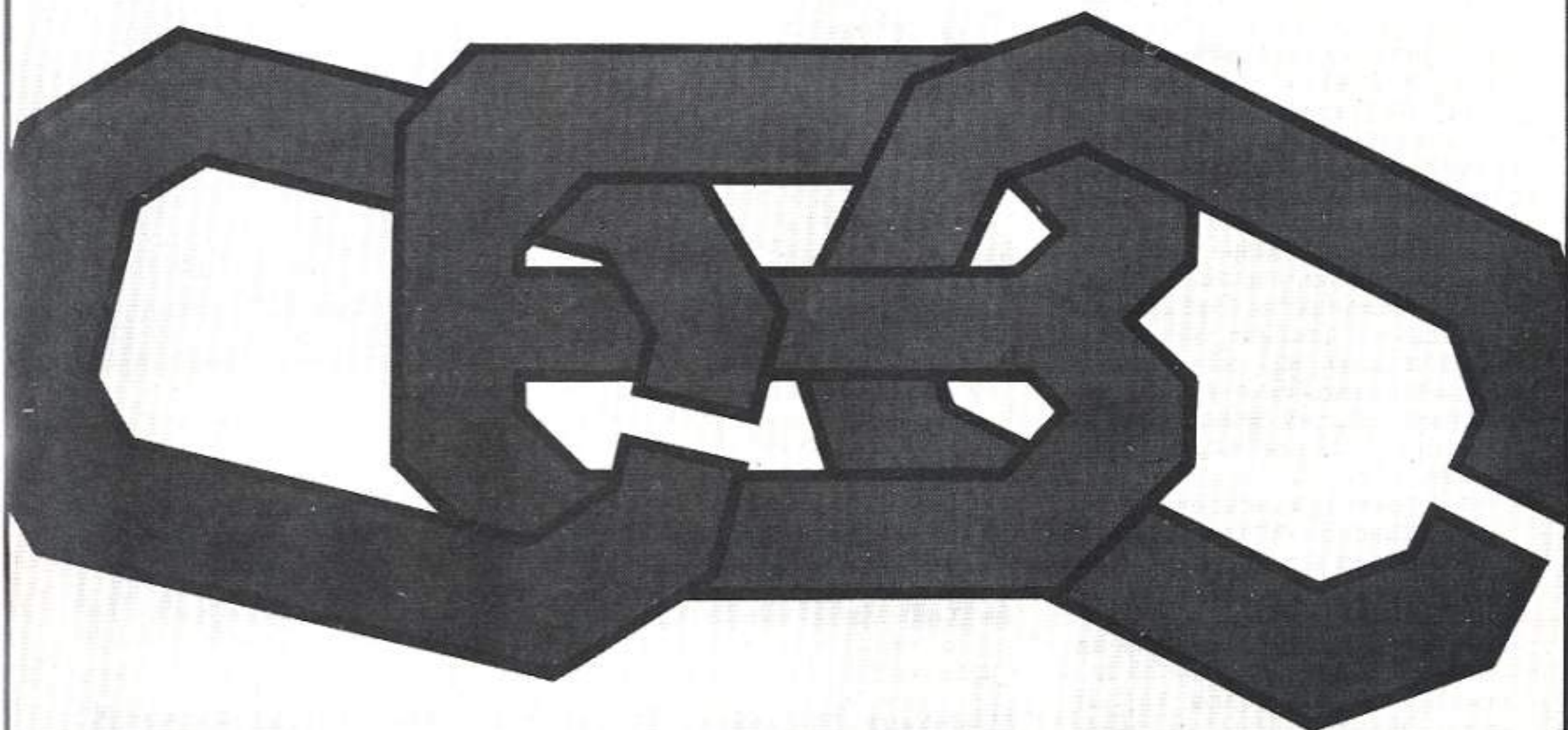
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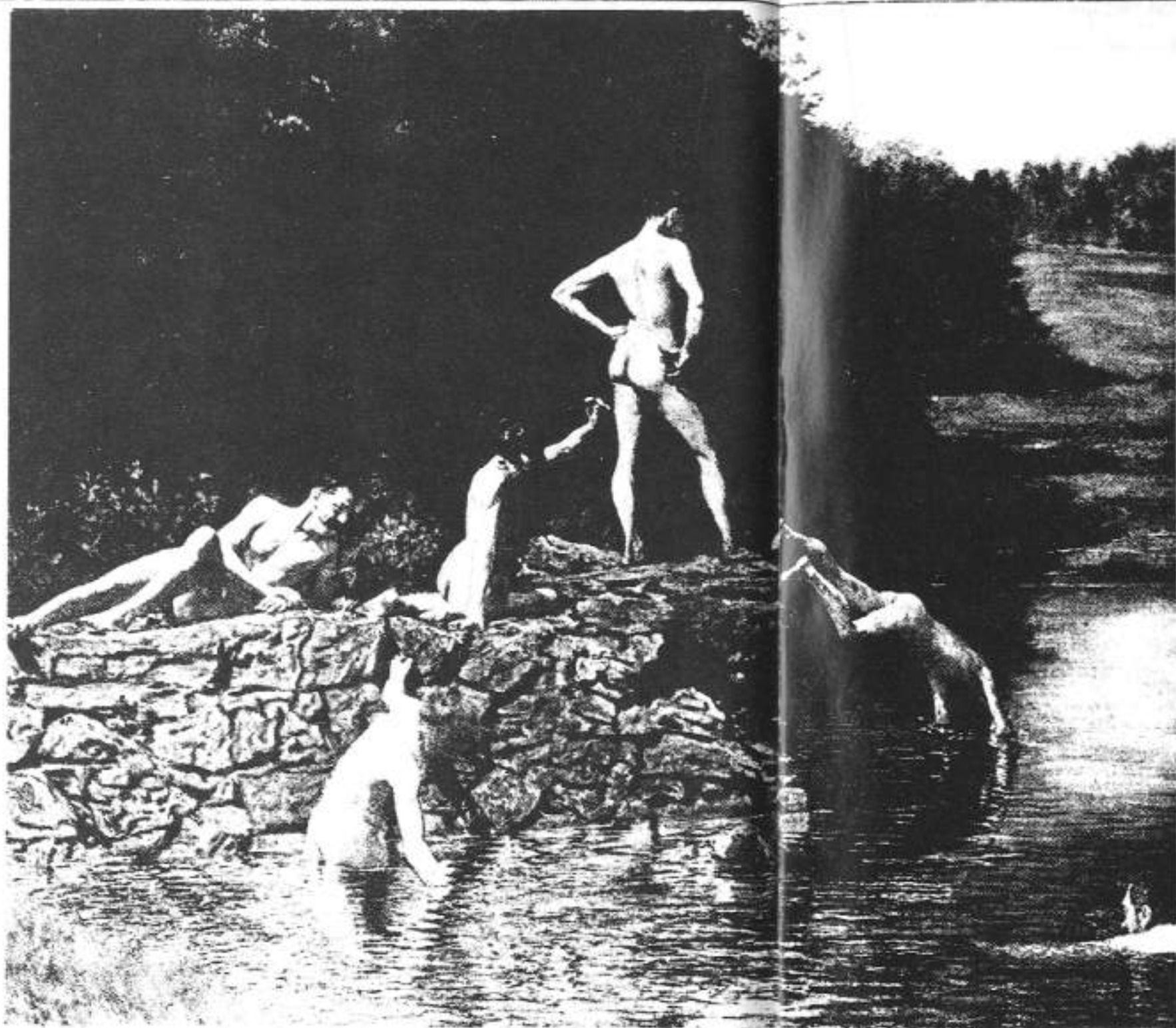
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It is often the case that the greatest of artists are little known during their own lifetimes. Frequently they must await the judgment of history — as if the rest of us had to catch up with them, those few whose imagination carries them so far ahead of the rest of their age. Such was the case in America with Emily Dickinson — only a few poems published during her lifetime in a local newspaper, the others rejected by the *Atlantic* editor until the rest were written only for herself and her family and became her “letter to the world, that never wrote to me.” Such was also the case in England with Gerard Manley Hopkins, a brilliant poet who revolutionized English meter and scansion and became a formative influence on such modern greats as Dylan Thomas, E.E. Cummings, and T.S. Eliot, but who during his lifetime submitted only a few poems to small religious journals, which promptly rejected them.

There was a large element of self-destruction in Hopkins, as well. When he became a priest, he destroyed all his earlier work, deeming his poetry inconsistent with his new religious life. This action speaks for the fundamental split in Hopkins’ nature. On the one hand he was a great sensualist, with an acute eye and ear for detailed observation of the physical world and a joy in celebration of the things of this world. But on the other hand he was subject to periods of long depression and melancholy, deriving from his sense of his inability to be a worthy servant of God and his sense of his own iniquity. Hopkins was torn between believing that the world was created by God and that all things in it (including Man) were therefore good, and believing that his own nature was evil and fallen, incapable of grace except through extreme acts of discipline and self-mortification.

It is probably natural for any religious person to have moments of doubt, moments in which he wonders if indeed he is worthy. But in Hopkins these doubts were particularly acute, since the sense of his own sinfulness derived from his homosexual feelings, which he was never able to eliminate, no matter how hard he tried. For the religious person can justify love, even carnal love, as the great poets of the 17th Century (Hopkins’ models) did, by comparing their love for a wife or mistress to Christ’s love for the world. Hopkins attempted much the same transformation, but he was faced with a dilemma: could he



The Swimming Hole by Thomas Eakins, 1883.

Mansex Fine

Gerard Manley Hopkins, the Poet/Priest

“And always there were the lads — the boys in scarlet coats and with ‘mansex fine.’ He was their priest — and he wanted to be so much more.”

by Robert K. Martin



The Swimming Hole by Thomas Eakins, 1883.

"And always there were the lads—the boys in scarlet coats and with 'mansex fine.' He was their priest—and he wanted to be so much more."

by Robert K. Martin

really compare his love for a young workingman to that of Christ for the world? Was not the comparison itself blasphemous? Hopkins' career is a magnificent, and painful, record of his attempt to reconcile his Christianity with his homosexuality.

It seems likely that Hopkins' religious feelings were sublimated—into his poetry, into his teaching, and into his parish work with young boys—and that his homosexuality rarely if ever was expressed physically. (That, of course, does not make him any the less homosexual—Abelard and Heloise in a similar way were forced to deny themselves the physical expression of their love, and yet it is clear that we would all consider them heterosexual.) For, from the beginning, Hopkins was driven by the ideals of purity and innocence, which undoubtedly derived partly out of the intellectual atmosphere of Pre-Raphaelitism and the Oxford Movement and partly out of his own sense of sin. One of his earliest poems, "Il Mystico" (an imitation of "Il Penseroso") begins "*Hence sensual gross desires, / Right offspring of your grimy mother Earth!*" expressing the desire to exorcise his own demons as well as his repulsion at the worldly and physical. But the poem then seems to move to a higher sensuality, in which (as is frequently the case with mystical writers) the sensual and the religious seem intertwined, as in the concluding desire to "*be so/ Melted in the dizzy bow/ That I may drink that ecstasy/ Which to pure souls alone may be.*"

From this desire to preserve the unfallen nature of Man, to restore and maintain an Edenic state of innocence, comes Hopkins' often-remarked joy in the spring (an element in his work which is particularly reflected in Cummings, although without the theological implications, of course). For Hopkins, spring is the ideal time of the year because of its associations with two great religious festivals, Easter, or the redemption of the world through Christ, and May, the month sacred to Mary, the "mothering" earth. Why is there such excitement, such urgency, Hopkins asks in his sonnet, "Spring": "*What is all this juice and all this joy?*" And he answers with the revealing plea of childhood innocence: "*Have, get, before it cloy, / Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning.*"

The last line cited provides a useful introduction to Hopkins' verbal fireworks. For the uninitiated reader Hopkins may seem eccentric, even difficult to read. But it is precisely

for these "experimental" qualities that Hopkins is remembered, long after his religious difficulties have ceased to interest the majority of readers. Hopkins more than anyone broke the back of the basic iambic structure of English poetry (that is, alternating short and long syllables) and substituted a system of accentuation closer to normal speech and to musical notation. There are five accents in the second line quoted ("*Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning*") and three of them follow in a row (cloud, Christ, lord). This provides alternating speeds and a syncopation, or rocking sensation, which when combined with Hopkins' love for archaic language, punning, and alliteration, creates a dynamic new poetry of sound.

The extreme religious nature of Hopkins seems to have been present early, but he did not make the decision to be converted to the Roman Catholic Church until he was 22 (his family were Anglicans). The year prior to Hopkins' conversion was one of extraordinary poetic activity and of exceptional emotional turmoil. Judging by those poems that remain, Hopkins underwent a severe crisis, probably an unhappy love affair, and it was the failure of that affair that led (or drove) him into the Church for consolation. The affair (which may or may not have been physical) was with fellow-poet Digby Dolben, whom he met in February, 1865. It would appear that Dolben did not respond with equal ardor, and Hopkins recorded his disappointed passion in a series of sonnets, which consciously imitated Shakespeare's addresses to his "master/mistress." Hopkins eventually came to "cease the morning and the abject fast," but only because "I have come to passion's end." In a poem which he never completed, Hopkins recorded his state of mind following his failure in love, which seemed to Hopkins to seal his fate and destine him for celibacy:

*Trees by their yield
Are known; but I—
My sap is sealed,
My root is dry.*

The following year Hopkins became a Roman Catholic, and two years later joined the Society of Jesus. He clearly hoped to bring peace to his tormented soul and rid himself of what he saw as his sinful nature and tried to expiate in religious exercise, "striped in secret with breath-taking whips." He re-

(continued on page 66)

introducing

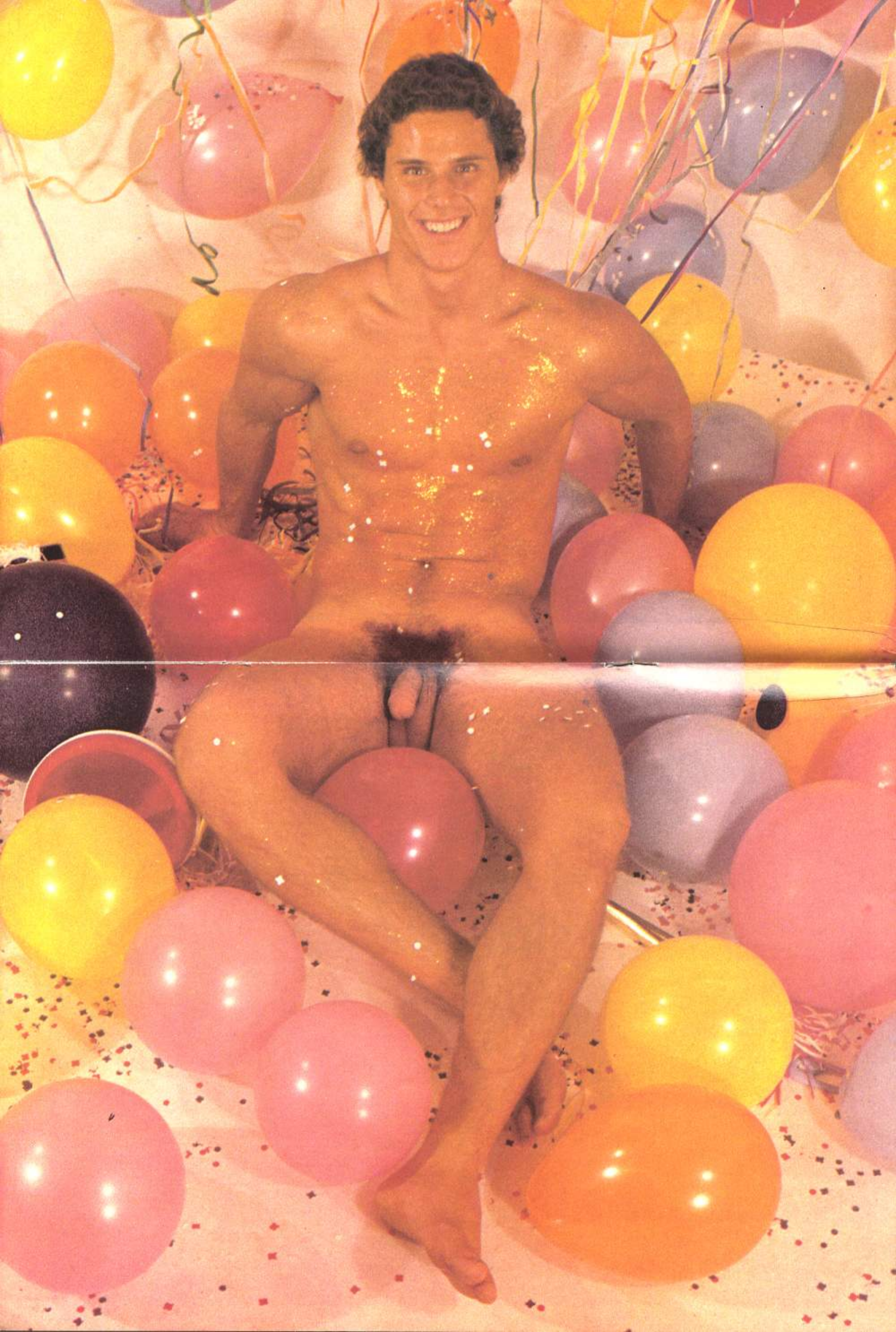


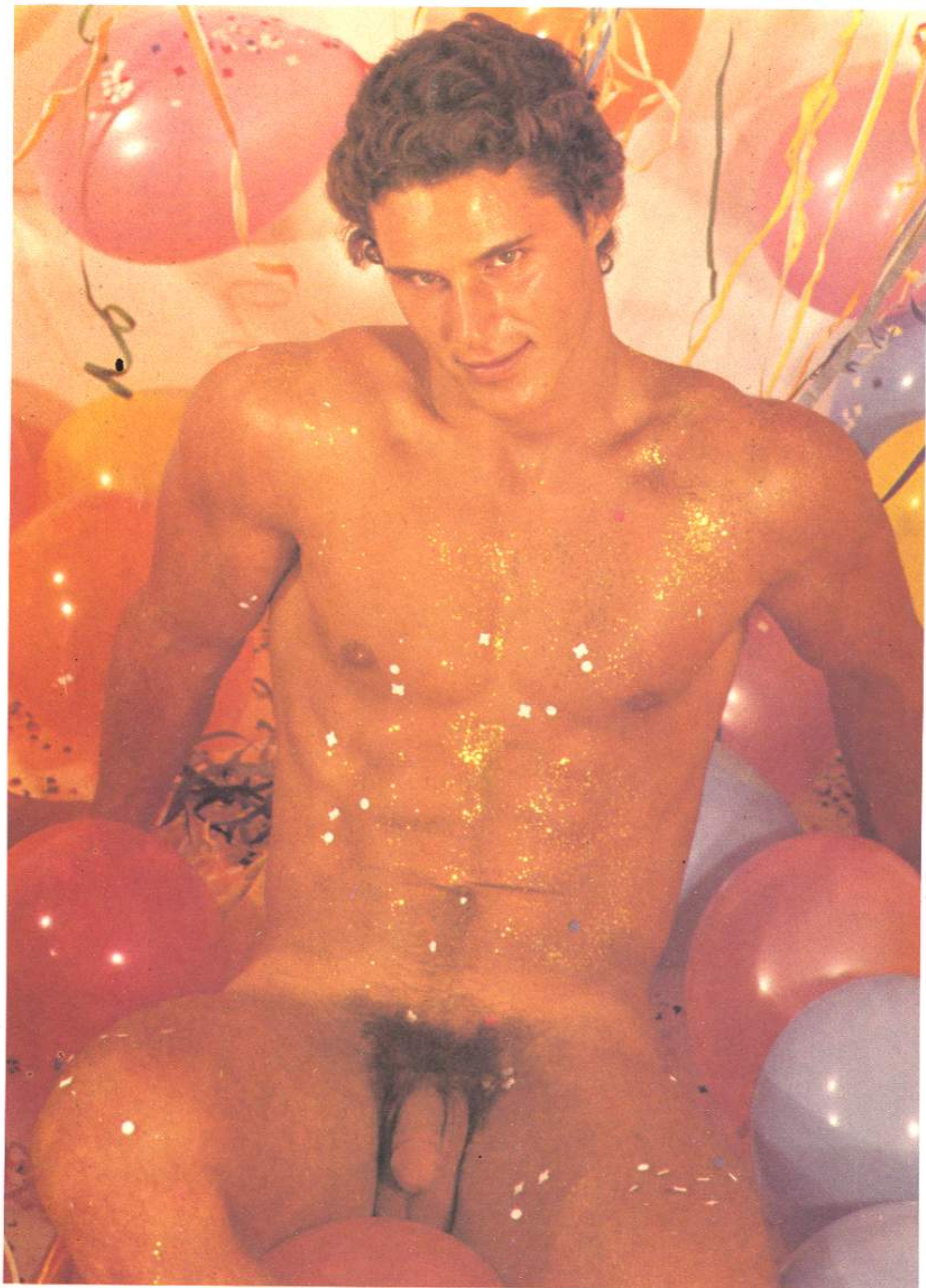
Frank Martone

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HY CHASE

Frank Martone. Remember that name. This 21-year-old New Jersey Leo knows what he wants and is bound to get it. Frank's an actor, a Theater Arts major at NYU until he dropped out to take advantage of the opportunity for some practical experience in his trade. He's appeared in several dinner theater productions on the East Coast, did modeling in New York, and now has his eye on a film career. His spare time is devoted to sports, exercise, reading books on science and biology, and just plain having fun. IN TOUCH is delighted to present him as our New Years' party boy for 1978.









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SHAPING UP

(continued from page 21)

limitations that's *right for you*. However, don't hang back and use limitations (real or imagined) as an excuse for not getting the most possible benefit out of your efforts.

Finally, decide just what turns you on when it comes to just having plain fun, because there is no reason why physical activity routines shouldn't be enjoyable. It's a very natural and strong motivation, and it doesn't matter if that pleasure comes directly from performing the activity itself, or from the resulting improvements in overall physical conditioning. Secondary aspects like companionship, fresh air, change in daily routine, change of environment, and mental stimulation will bring additional enjoyment.

After considering available time, money, facilities, physical condition and general interests, you may want to devote some attention to your mental attitude toward programmed physical fitness. In other words, if you're going horseback riding, determining which is the head and which end is the tail, and what you will say and do when confronting one end or the other.

Regardless of your ambitions, you'll be far more successful if you learn to get your mind and body working together in a coordinated effort. The best way to achieve this total involvement is to acquire what is sometimes referred to as "the exercise habit." The exercise habit is simply the habit of scheduling a physical activity at the same time, on the same days, for the same length of time. Habitual exercise makes physical fitness almost automatic, decreasing the possibility of scheduling conflicts. Although it may take as long as a year to establish such a habit, once achieved, it adds a strong regulatory influence in most people's hectic lifestyles.

At your first opportunity, buy a subscription to one or two magazines devoted to your special activity. There are magazines on everything from boxing to bowling and skiing to skating. Besides letting you in on who's who in the top ranks of your sport, magazines are also full of helpful tips on new techniques, new equipment, common problems and their solution, plus meets and events. As a subscriber, you might also qualify for special rates and discounts. Reading your way to fitness sounds laughable, but is not altogether as farfetched as it sounds. A good working knowledge of your sport will enable you to accurately

measure your progress towards fitness proficiency and make the job of setting realistic goals easier.

Even the largest team sports have skills which can be practiced and perfected on an individual basis. You might find it helpful to team up with what body builders and weightlifters call a "workout buddy;" someone near your own level of ability with whom you can practice, exchange ideas, and mutually assist in a coordinated routine. Since there is sometimes an element of friendly competition involved in this system, it might not be wise to team up with your lover. Choose a good friend instead, or another club/gym member. However, if you feel you're both mature enough, working out together could be a pleasant new dimension to your lover relationship.

The entire country has recently experienced a resurgence of interest in physical fitness. Much of this interest has resulted from medical findings linking heart disease, respiratory ailments, and circulatory problems to lack of regular strenuous physical exercise. Men who dropped out of such programs after high school or college are now bicycling, jogging, swimming, weightlifting, and otherwise getting back into the exercise habit. Whole industries have suddenly grown up to meet the new demand for equipment, facilities, information, and training. Long-ignored sports like soccer are experiencing a renewed popularity along with tennis, handball, hockey, and bicycling. Add to these the traditional baseball, basketball, and football and you begin to get some idea of the wide range of sports from which to choose. To make the selection process a bit easier, try grouping the different choices in the following manner.

There are mainly three general groups or classifications. There are those sports which are played as a team or in couples. Many of these activities need little equipment or special clothing, but do require large playing areas. Tennis, handball, bowling, racketball, volleyball, football, basketball, baseball, and soccer are just a few. For the more solitary individuals, there are sports which have few special requirements and can be enjoyed alone. Swimming, springboard diving, jogging, calisthenics, golf, bicycling, and track lead this category. Solitary sports allow the individual to set his own pace and usually don't require special training or above-average coordination. Both solitary and team sports can be inexpensive and fit

into the most crowded daily schedule.

A third group of activities can be performed solo or in teams, but usually requires special facilities, special equipment, and involves a high degree of physical ability. Fencing, gymnastics, sculling (rowing), polo, weightlifting, karate/judo, hockey, and scuba-diving could be called "special" activities. There are also miscellaneous activities which should not be overlooked. Take dancing, as an example. Folk and square dancing are excellent physical conditioners, as are ballet and modern dance. (Rudolph Nureyev has been called the most superbly conditioned athlete in America today). Even something as simple as jumping rope can be surprisingly beneficial. Poker and horseshoes, however, *do not* qualify.

If you happen to be rather non-physical in your disposition, it might be helpful to take up a ready made fitness plan where everything is proscribed step by step. The Canadian Air Force 5-BX Plan, which has been used by the U.S. Air Force for almost 20 years, is still an excellent program of physical fitness for any age bracket. Broken down into several levels of physical proficiency, the 5-BX Plan takes the individual from a beginner's level to higher ones through specially designed combinations of calisthenics and running, until the person reaches a pre-established goal targeted for his particular age and weight. Many clubs also offer their own fitness programs which are personally supervised by trained instructors. The only thing that any advertisement, person, or program which promises you fitness on "5-Minutes-A-Day" can really deliver, if you are well informed, is a few good laughs.

Regardless of which activities you decide to engage in, or to what degree you wish to pursue them, there are a few rules-of-thumb to remember nonetheless.

DON'T expect instant results. Be patient and stick to a systematic plan. Follow your own pace and undertake only what you seriously intend to finish.

DO take the time to learn properly. Self-teaching is a great supplement, but it is no substitute for personalized instruction. Get the facts and you'll avoid needless setbacks.

DON'T undertake any physical activity without first warming up your muscles. A dozen or more toe touches, jumping-jacks, sit-ups, and push-ups will prepare the body for more strenuous exertion to follow.

DO wear all necessary protective clothing particular to your sport. Every man should wear an athletic supporter (jockstrap) and a protective cup if involved in heavy contact games. Pulled groin muscles are a bum trip. Wear protective pads over knees and elbows.

DON'T allow your ego to rule over your better judgement. Others who display great skill with little apparent effort probably have years of practice behind them. Follow your own drummer and never do *anything* on a dare; there's more shame in stupidity than in any inability.

DO see your doctor regularly. Your physician is always your best coach.

Whether we want to recognize the fact or not, our bodies say a great deal about us as individuals, as well as determining much of our sexual attractiveness. Though we can't change our heredity, it is possible, with some conscientious effort, to make the most of what physical characteristics we've been given. A well-kept body is a source of justifiable pride, as well as a pleasure for others to both share and admire. It also allows a man to work better, play better, and think better.

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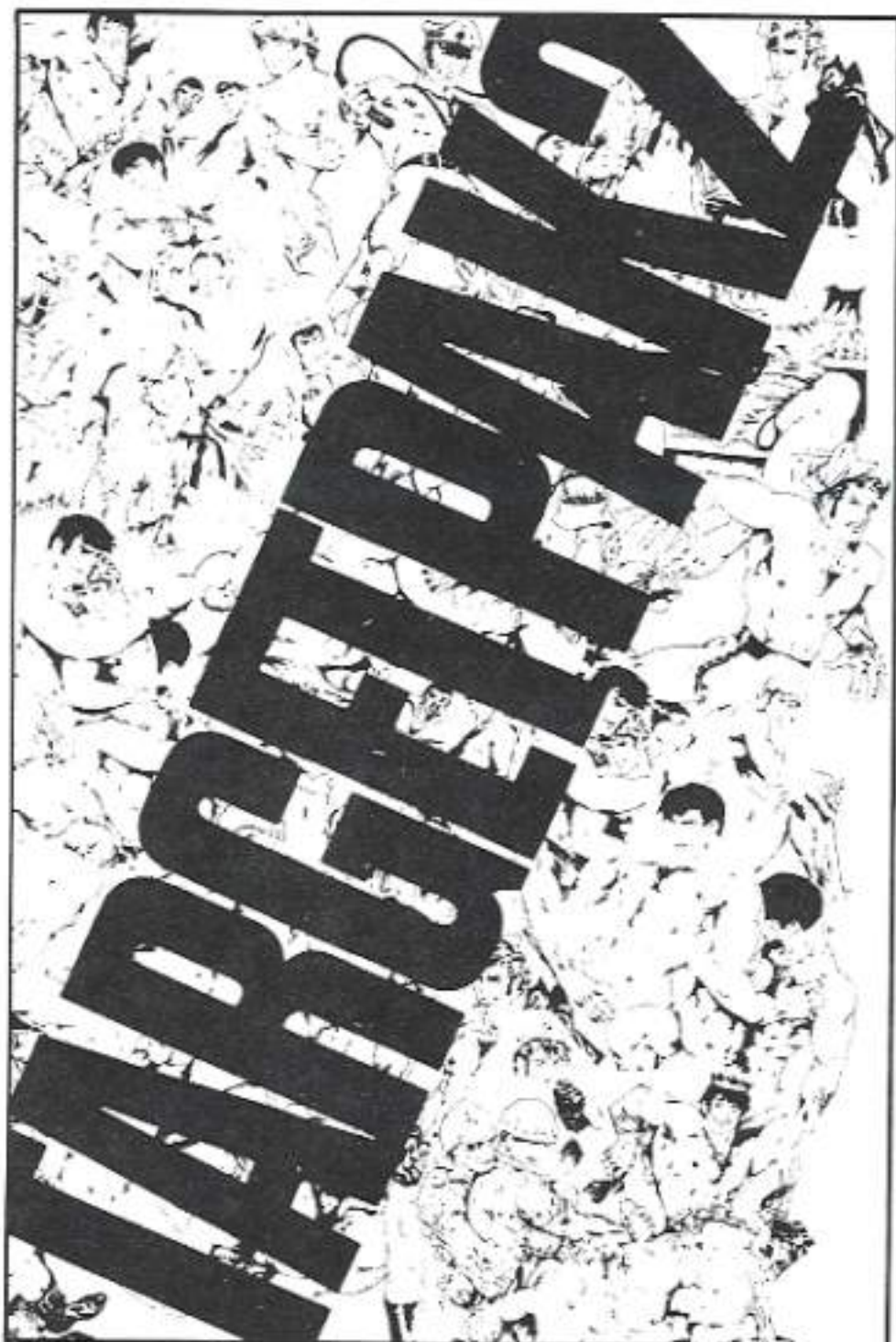
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Steve McQueen

by Jeremy Hughes

No other superstar of the past generation has so painstakingly etched a more aloofly cool image than he. Even today, at what could be a mellowing 47 (b. March 24, 1930 — not 1932, as some official optimists record), hairless swimmer's body gone distressingly thick, face deeply creased, Terrence Steven McQueen remains the least accessible, un interviewed, most private personality in Hollywood.

He only rarely condescends to make the mandatory promotional rounds of talk shows, and on those exceptional cases when he does grudgingly consent to face the world as himself and answer questions, his responses are evasive, noncommittal, and monosyllabic. One Los Angeles newspaper recently noted that "compared to Steve McQueen, Robert, Paul, and Barbra are publicity hounds... A tortured 'loner'... Steve's demands for isolation puzzles Hollywood...."

But, then, Hollywood has ever been intrigued with its resident puzzlers, from Valentino through Garbo to Bogart. The juicy conclusion, inevitably, is that the enigma in question undoubtedly has something to hide. In the case of McQueen, it could be the direct opposite: if, indeed, McQueen is hiding anything, it is possibly the gloomy fact that the poor guy just doesn't have a bloody thing to hide. All available evidence indicates that he is a very ordinary man, thrust, almost by chance, into extraordinary circumstances (in fact, the total absence of distinguishing mannerisms makes him the despair of impressionists).

He was born in Beech Grove, a tiny village not far from beautiful downtown Indianapolis, and boasts, "I started loving as soon as the doctor slapped me on my ass!" From the outset, that craving for love was rejected. His father almost immediately deserted the family, and his mother shunted her new little boy off to stay with grandparents at the even tinier hamlet of Slater, in the corn-growing fields of north-central Missouri (inaccurately cited by some biographers as his birthplace). There he regularly, if reluctantly, did onerous chores until he was 11, at which time his mother remarried and he was shipped cross-country to join her and the new stepfather in California.



To this day, he roils against those early years, grumbling that "I'd never been exposed to good music or been around cultured people." He is then at pains to add that he now digs "classical music," but if you happen to hitch a ride with him in one of the 53 vehicles (trucks, cars, motorcycles) he owns, the cassette he thrusts into the tape deck is more likely to be The Mamas and The Poppas than a Bach Invention.

He was a "wild and difficult" boy, restless and understandably insecure, skinny and undersized, with a burning need for the attention that would define, or at least confirm, his existence. As so often happens with teenagers confronted with an identity crisis, McQueen's unbridled



energies were not always directed at activities approved by proper society, as a result of which he spent two traumatic years at the home for delinquent boys in Chino, California — where he still pays inspirational visits and has founded the Steve McQueen Scholarship.

Upon release, he was taken by his mother to New York. WW II was nearing its climax, but McQueen was too young for the regular services so he ran away and became a deckhand on a Greek oil tanker. There, one may be sure, the blond-haired 15-year-old received the most liberal of educations. But he needed "more space," and during his sixteenth year took on a variety of drifters' jobs: tree-topper for a Canadian lumber company, roustabout for a traveling carnival, and a runner for a Port Arthur brothel ("I had the prettiest chick there").

"Years ago I found out you've got to do things your own way, the way you believe in," he muses in a sometimes reedy voice, "or, chances are, you'll fall flat on your ass." And, back in those directionless days, he did indeed do a lot of falling on those compact buns. In desperation, he enlisted in the Marines as soon as he was 17, but his free-wheeling indifference to discipline landed him in one of the Corps' more notorious brigades, where more lessons in conformity were "impressed" upon him. He sums up his lifetime aversion to authority with the succinct observation, "I never liked cops!"

Discharged early in 1950, McQueen spent his 20th year in New York, at a series of futile pursuits: docker, bartender, and, finally, television repairman — the "search" continuing unabated. Until, that is, a contact he made while fixing a TV set got him into the Neighborhood Playhouse. When he was graduated from that institution in 1952, he won a scholarship to the prestigious Uta Hagen-Herbert Berghof Dramatic School.

The hungry floater had found his moveable feast. Years later, in an uncharacteristic reflection on his career, he says, "I like my work: I need it. I've got to have action.... The question of my identity has been solved.... They say I'm a tough guy. I'm not. I'm just doing my own thing... I'm not a great

actor. No actor is objective . . . there's a great deal of myself in my work."

That "work," in those lean first years, consisted mostly of television bits and summer stock. His first professional appearance was with Margaret O'Brien in that old chestnut, *Peg O' My Heart*. Then came the Rochester Stock Company with Ethel Waters in *Member of the Wedding* and with Melvyn Douglas in *Time Out for Ginger*. Enrollment at The Actor's Studio followed, leading to his first Broadway appearance (*The Gap*) and, in 1956, the big break — replacing Ben Gazzara as the drug addict in *A Hatful of Rain*.

He was only 26, and referred to himself as a "candy-tail actor," but that year was a noteworthy one in several ways. In addition to having become a "Broadway star," he played his first film role (as a \$19-a-day extra in *Somebody Up There Likes Me*), and he met and married Neile Adams (on Nov. 2 in San Clemente), an actress-dancer then appearing in *The Pajama Game*. Marital bliss was short-lived, however, as the newlywed McQueens were separated almost immediately, Neile to a Las Vegas revue gig and Steve into the Allied Artists production of a Harold Robbins potboiler, *Never Love a Stranger* (withheld from release for two years), playing "a nice Jewish boy from a rough neighborhood who makes good." Billed as "Steven" McQueen, his co-stars were John Drew Barrymore and Lita Milan.

His first film to be released was Paramount's semi-camp sci-fi quickie, *The Blob*, with Aneta Corseaut, in 1958, the same year Dick Powell cast him as hero of the pilot television Western that was both to make his name a household word and imprint his unique presence on America's consciousness — *Wanted: Dead or Alive*.

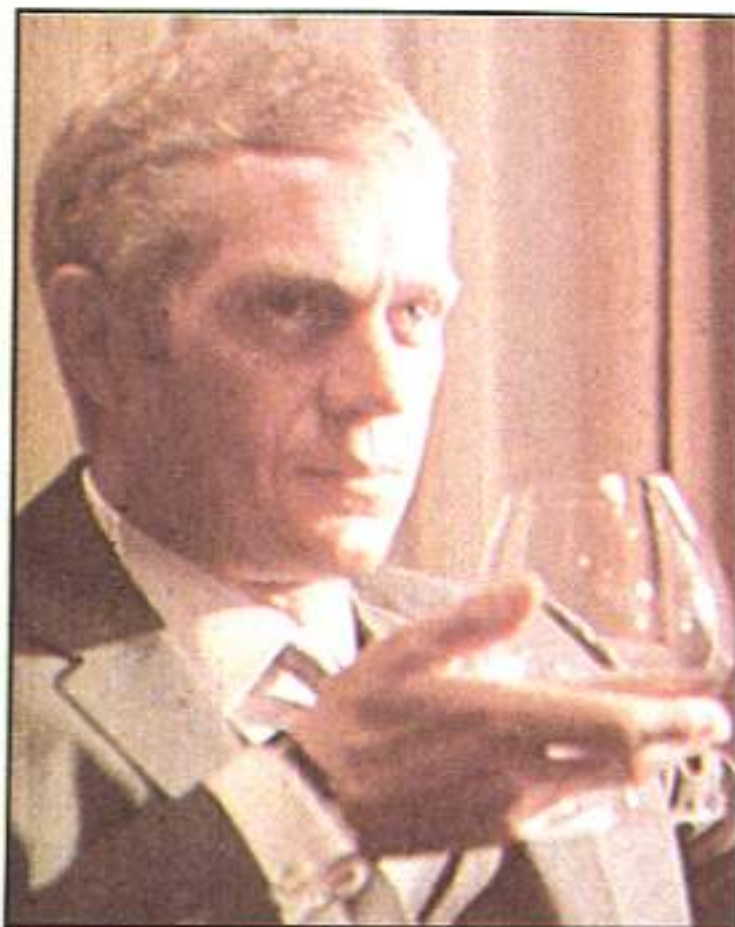
Frank Sinatra and his "rat pack" were in the throes of their series of rather self-indulgent films when ol' blue eyes had a falling-out with Sammy Davis Jr. and, catching McQueen as Josh Randall, tapped him to do the part of the GI sergeant in *Never So Few* (1959). This led to *The Magnificent Seven* (1960), *The Honeymoon Machine* (1961), *Hell is for Heroes* and *The War Lover* (1962). Gradually, the nice shadings of the prototypical McQueen persona were being refined — a wary, resourceful, totally self-contained entity.

This character reached its apogee in his third war film in a row, *The*



Great Escape (1963), as Hiltz, the "Cooler King," whose insolence earns him long spells in solitary. That self-styled critic, Parker Tyler, in his labored attempt to expose latent (or repressed) gay inclinations for his *Screening the Sexes: Homosexuality in the Movies*, perceives McQueen's role thusly: "... deprived of his chum by the latter's open dash for the fence... McQueen has the status of a 'loner.'"

"Through some curious design of fate, he manages to acquire that symbol of Leather Boy sexuality, a motorcycle... He is detected by frontier guards, so that we witness a merry chase (which) ends up when McQueen approaches a formidable set of double barbed-wire barriers... He has to give up, and smiling a little, extracts himself gingerly from the barbed wire — but not before he has given the (doubtless still warm) seat of the stolen motorcycle an affectionate caress... It was this, I think, that caused sud-



denly to dawn on me that the whole escape maneuver had been anally oriented."

This interpretation must have come as a nasty shock to McQueen, whose sexuality — in a town where even Lassie has not been above innuendo — has never been questioned. He had two children by Neile Adams (Terry, now 18, and Chad, 17) before their 1972 Santa Monica divorce, and has been married to Ali McGraw since July 12, 1973 — a marriage which is now in the process of dissolution.

While there are, unquestionably, sexual implications to his fascination with motorcycles and speed and sport cars (even *he* once admitted candidly that his Porsche was "almost as good as sex"), McQueen's propensity to look at all issues in terms of black and white, with no gray areas, would mitigate against unconventional dalliance. It is true that he is on record as favoring legalization of pot, but he is generally neutral when it comes to controversial issues: "I only jump up when it affects me personally," he asserts.

In any event, the career following *The Great Escape* is well known, through such high points as *The Cincinnati Kid* (1965), *Nevada Smith* (1966), *The Sand Pebbles* (1966) — for which he received his only Oscar nomination — *Bullitt* (1968), *The Reivers* (1969), *The Getaway* (1972) (in which Ali prophetically played his wife), *Papillon* (1973), and *The Towering Inferno* (1974) — his last film to go into general release.

Among his earlier awards (1970) was being named "favorite motion picture actor" as the result of a poll conducted in 41 countries by Reuters News Bureau for World Film Favorites (Barbra Streisand won the distaff equivalent). The one he most treasures was being named an honorary member of the Stuntman's Association of Motion Pictures in Oct. of 1976. He admits, blue-gray eyes twinkling, that he'll never win any beauty prizes: "I sure don't get by on beauty," he murmurs ruefully. "When I look in a mirror, I don't get goose-pimples."

After playing a fire chief in 1974, at a period in his career when his quotation for a film was an astronomical \$3 million, he took a couple of years off to go into a retreat that even included closing his P.O. Box and cancelling delivery of unwanted intrusions from the outside world in a very characteristic, hot-tempered fashion — he literally threw both

(continued on page 94)

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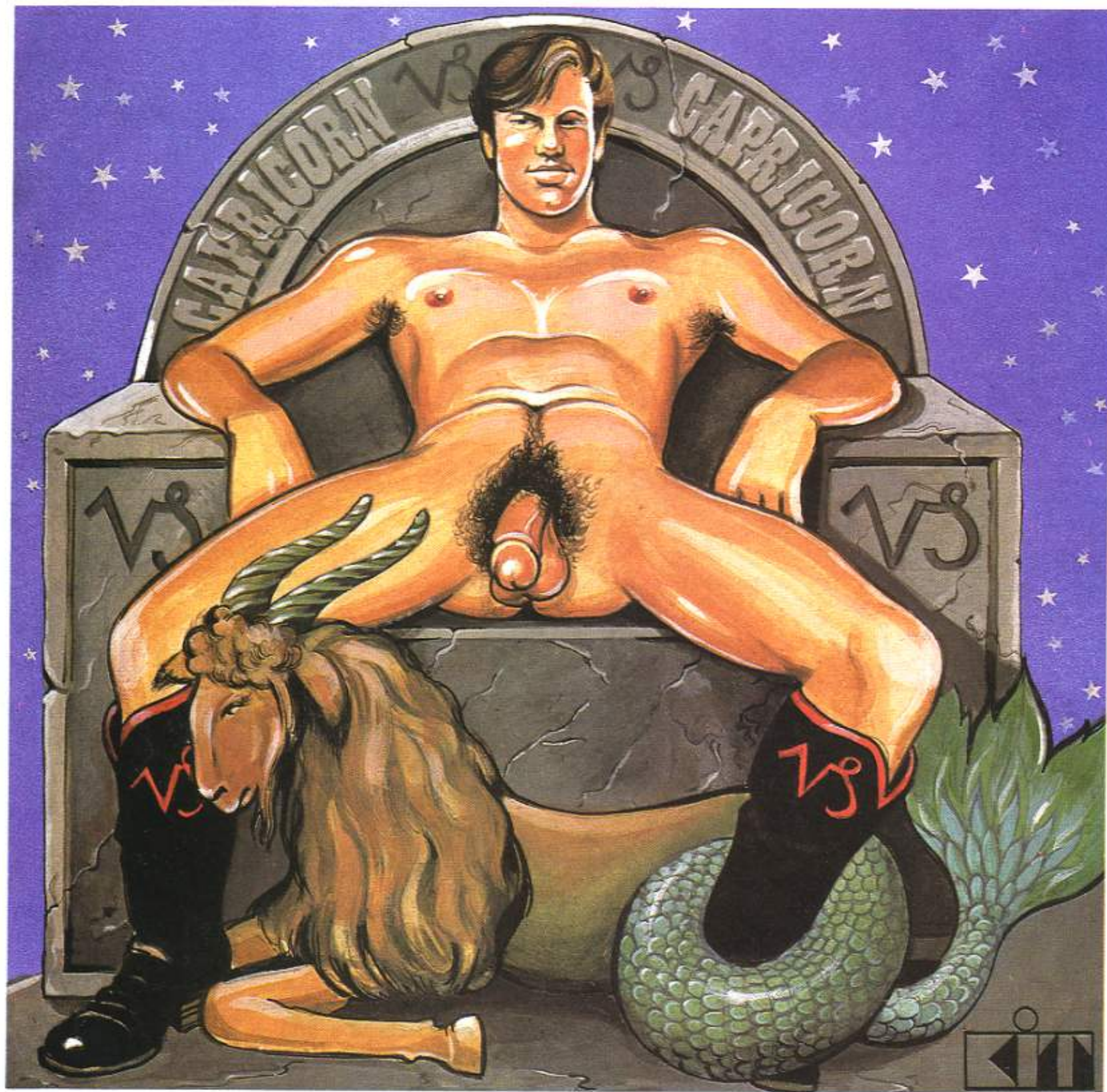
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By Roger Asquith

HOROSCOPE

capricorn

December 22 — January 19

This is a time to work out a deal with a partner for mutual acquisition of money. Pair and share. If you've been going it alone and finding it too much, then find a partner and give him half the load.... Of course there is no need to be stingy with the other load you have... you can easily find somebody to take all that if you know how to operate. Spend a little less time bar-hopping and concentrate more time around your favorite watering hole. Tip the bartender and he'll indicate who is who and wants what... then, when you know the score, go and play the game.

aquarius

January 20 — February 18

You have been full of bright ideas, but have lacked the energy to carry them out. A few nights in bed, on your own, might give you a chance to rest up enough to carry them through. Ease up on the spending spree and start thinking about some serious investments. Don't listen to idol gossip, in most cases they haven't had him and couldn't if they tried... go find a regular Adonis and idolize him... they're all the same when the lights are out, but there's no harm in burning the candle at both ends once in a while.

pisces

February 19 — March 20

You've been working hard lately, according to this over-worked crystal ball, and you're entitled to take it easy for a few days. If, however, I'm not seeing too clear and you've been lazy, then skip the break until you deserve it. The men in your life have been very attentive and you've gotten a little spoiled... so shape up and learn to appreciate this attention. Give as good as you get, share the goodies and make others as happy as you are... or have been.

aries

March 21 — April 19

People will be attracted to you this period, but they're after something. It could be your body or your bank account, but you should know how to size them up. Freeloaders never last long in any social circle, so start to weed them out. You have a tendency to pick up strays and feel sorry for them. Some of them may deserve your help, but the majority are just one-night-stands even though it stands all night and half the next morning. Take them as they are and when they're ready to drift again make sure you have your wallet and door key.

taurus

April 20 — May 20

Travel seems to be looming up on the horizon for you... a little trip to visit friends would break the routine for you. It's nice to see what's going on in other people's lives. Don't break up any marriages, but a casual threesome never hurt anyone, except the one underneath... so be careful and take along your joy-juice. After the trip, get stuck into your work schedule and get some shekels in the bank. Go easy with the desserts unless it's strictly dietetic... promise to stay all night and help with the breakfast dishes in the morning.

gemini

May 21 — June 20

Many of your friends find you quite a catch for parties... you have that certain something that many of them want to enjoy. Whether it's personality or your looks, hang on to it, or rather let a few others hang on to it. Share it around but don't use it as a meal ticket all the time. Gossip will float around the clique of barflies concerning you. Ignore it, wear tighter pants and show them what they've been missing... it won't stop the gossip, but you'll feel better and a lot more will get a better feel. If you've got it, baby, flaunt it.

cancer

June 21 — July 22

No need to hide in that darkened part of the bar... come out and let everyone enjoy. Flash that smile and open the shirt. Accept a drink from a stranger and join a grope group just for the feel of it. If you've already heeded this advice, help those who are just getting started. Now that your ego has been given a boost, find some shy young man hiding in the corner and bring him out... very gently at first, and make sure you've got warm hands. Avoid loudmouths and party-poopers; you're on a errand of mercy, a rescue mission. Haven't you always wanted to take somebody else in hand?

leo

July 23 — August 22

Your ability to give and receive affection will peak in the next few weeks. Everybody will want to climb aboard your love train... now aren't you glad you got that kingsize bed when it was on sale? Enjoy your popularity and let them all flock around to see what it is that makes you so desirable... but watch out for the fickle flockers who are only there to gloat and drink up your booze. You can give them a lot more than the fickle finger. This surge of affection should warm your bed for a few months to come and help you retain a good working relationship due to lack of frustration.

virgo

August 23 — September 22

And you're supposed to represent virginity? My friend, you've been having a ball lately, haven't you? If you haven't done it... somebody has done it to you. Well, if it felt good, do it again. Your weekends may show up your weak points, but remember to concentrate on some strong points during the week and keep that paycheck coming in. Steaks and oysters will keep him coming, but they don't grow on trees. Be a little charitable... you don't always have to take the best-looking one in the place... beauty is only skin deep, unless you're a hairbender.

libra

September 23 — October 22

Since it's likely your love-life will cool off a little this period, you should have time to shape up, not only your body but your pad as well. Sure, you keep the crystal dusted and the bed springs well oiled, but there are some things you can do to spruce up the joint. If you want a new relationship with an old acquaintance, serving up that same old souffle won't do anything... take your lover to one of those swinging vacation spots and get it together under the stars on a warm beach. If that doesn't work, leave him there and get friendly with the natives.

scorpio

October 23 — November 21

Facing up to a ugly truth isn't easy and you avoid it like a dose, but if you have any unpleasant tasks to perform, grit your teeth and do them. If he hasn't paid his rent, either kick him out or find out the real reason why. If he's cheated and you haven't, then it's you who needs the kick. Whatever, get it into the open and see it in the light of day, but make sure the neighbors aren't enjoying the show. Once you have solved your problem you'll find life can be very sweet again... you'll also be glad you saw it during the day. It looks good from another angle, right?

sagittarius

November 23 — December 21

Partnerships and marriages are all favored now. If you have some dude in tow or would like to lead one down the garden path, now is the time. Cold nights and half-empty beds lead to frustration, deprivation, and masturbation... even if you only do it until you need glasses. Be like the squirrel and get some nuts to chew on during the winter. Sharing your bed and breakfast gives you a lift for the day and when you get home at night, you're bound to get a raise. Quick, like a bunny, go out and see what you can drag home.

(continued from page 23)



Johnny Weissmuller was the most familiar of the silver screen's many Tarzans.



James Dean and Tab Hunter were two of Warner Brothers' stable of male stars.



Bekim Fehmiu, featured in Paramount's *The Adventurers*, turned a lot of gays on.

Ultra Violet and even Paul Morrissey had bit parts in *MC*.)

The '70s expressed this freer attitude by more male nudity on the screen. Robert Forster rode bareback and turned Marlon Brando on (and many in the audience) in *Reflections in a Golden Eye*. Later Brando showed his backside in the much-talked-about *Last Tango in Paris*. Michael Margotta let it all hang out in *Drive, He Said* (1971), produced and directed by Jack Nicholson, who showed some skin in *The Last Detail* and *Carnal Knowledge* (1971).

From England and Stanley Kubrick, we in the provinces were exposed to *A Clockwork Orange* and Malcolm McDowell. And, of course, there was hairy-chested Sean Connery as James Bond in *Diamonds are Forever* and other diversions such as *Zardoz*. (Roger Moore is now 007.) Michael York increased his gay following when he became involved in a triangle with Liza Minnelli and Helmut Griem in 1972's *Cabaret*. He later took his shirt off in *Island of Dr. Moreau* with Burt Lancaster as the disturbed scientist.

Fellini sent us *Satyricon* from Rome with love. It showed Martin Potter and Hiram Keller cruising through Rome's past, an era of decadence and superstition.

It seems to be obligatory for certain male actors to remove their shirts in films. And it seems to be a must for Barbra Streisand's co-stars.

Hunky Ryan O'Neal bared his chest in *What's Up, Doc?* with Barbra (as he had in *Love Story*, *Thief Who Came To Dinner* and other films of recent years). It seems we never see too much of Ryan. Following Ryan's example were George Segal in *The Owl and The Pussycat*, Robert Redford in *The Way We Were*, and Kris Kristofferson in *A Star Is Born*.

It's hard to recall a film where Paul Newman or Charles Bronson or Jan-Michael Vincent don't take off their shirts. (And in *Buster and Billie*, Jan gave us a full frontal view.)

A Separate Peace (1972) introduced blond John Heyl and brown-haired Parker Stevenson, who went on to do *Lifeguard* with Sam Elliott and is now one of the Hardy Boys on TV. Keith Carradine went au naturel in *Nashville*. Perry King did the same in both *Mandingo*, as the plantation owner's son, and later as a filmland romeo in *Wild Party* with Raquel Welch. Perry's fans were sorely disappointed when he kept his pants on in Andy Warhol's X-rated *Bad* and wished there were less grossness and more nudity in the film.

Obviously, taking one's clothes off before the camera is no guarantee of success. John Phillip Law played the blind angel in *Barbarella* with Jane Fonda (directed by Jane's then-husband, Roger Vadim) and the cool, calculating network executive in *The Love Machine*. He certainly has a nice bod, but demand

for his screen services is not very hot. Paramount is planning to re-release *Barbarella* in the U.S. and Canada with a hefty ad campaign, so this may trigger some new interest in John.

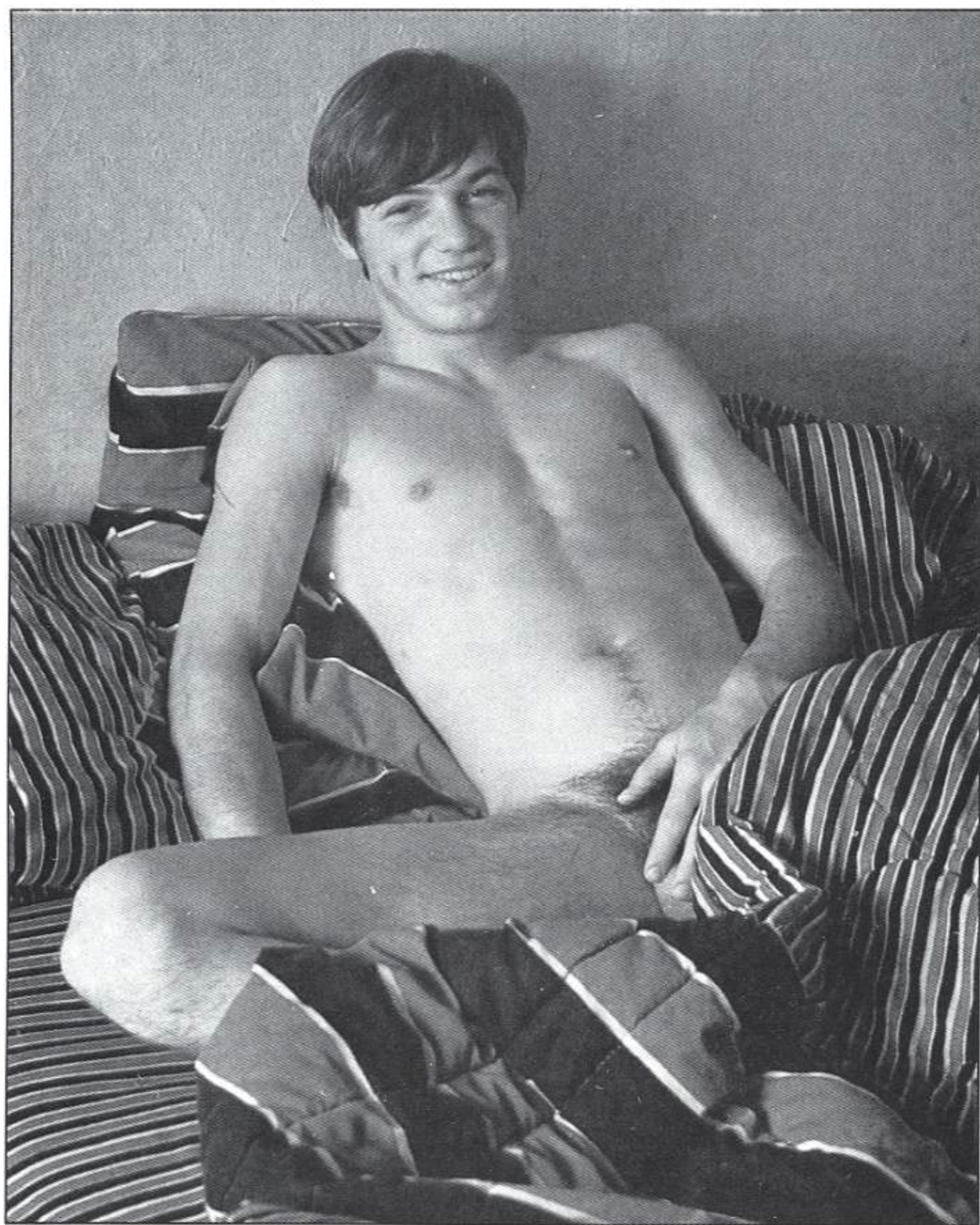
Sultry Bekim Fehmiu took his shirt off in *The Adventurers*, but the picture did poorly at the box-office. He took it all off in *Madame Kitty*, as did Helmut Berger. Both are nicely endowed, but critics felt they needed better material. I hope they get it. Both are quite popular companions among jet-setters, or so I hear.

Nothing takes the place of a good story and likeable characters as a showcase for an actor's talents. Acting ability and charisma also enter into the picture.

Besides the re-release of *Barbarella*, there's a new film in production now, starring Jan-Michael Vincent. It's titled *Big Wednesday* and co-stars William Katt and Gary Busey in the story of three comrades during the 1961-75 period; it includes a big Army induction scene, and will be released next summer. Burt Reynolds has wrapped up *The End*. John Travolta will be seen in *Saturday Night Fever* about Christmas time, and in *Grease* about Easter.

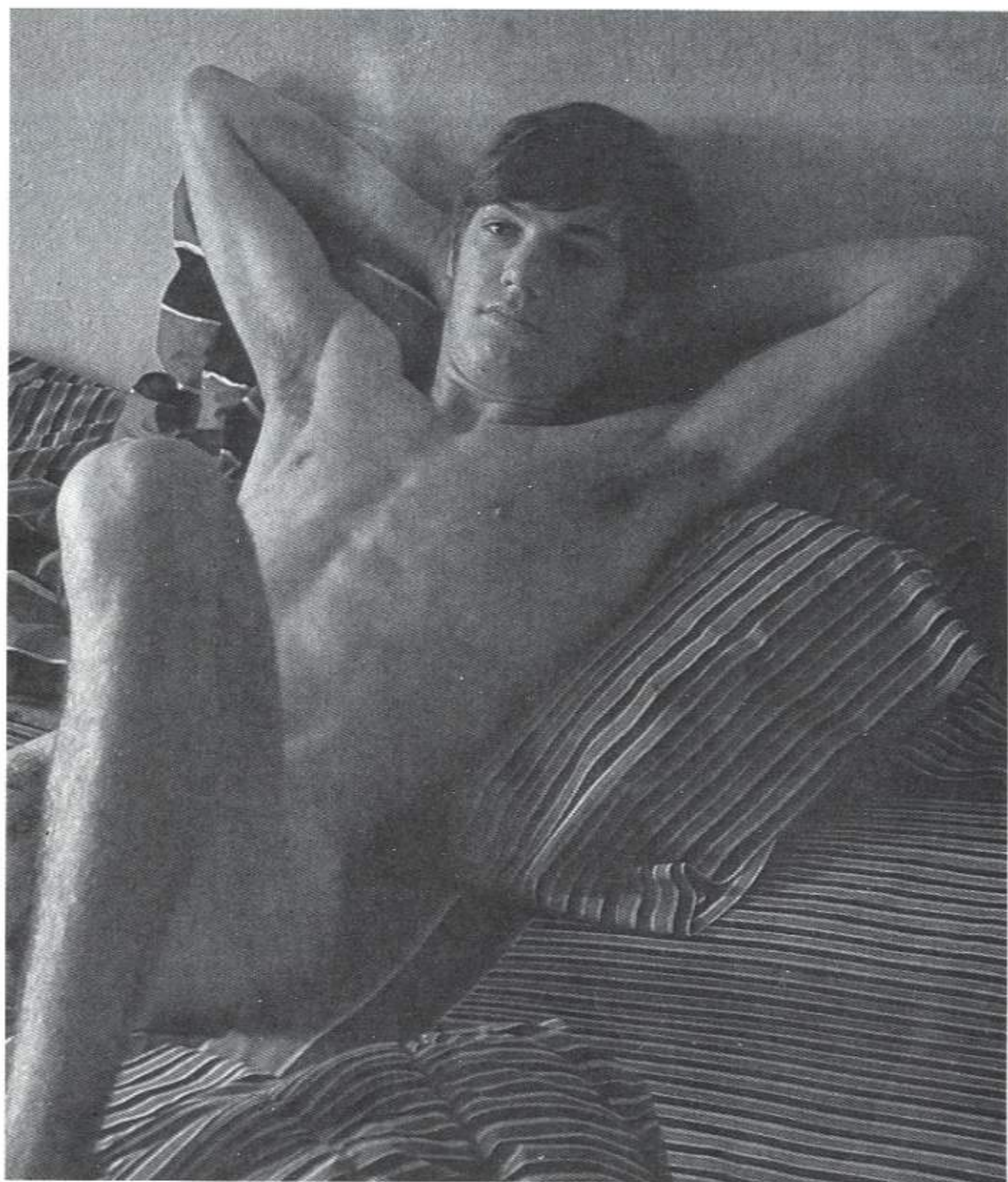
Movie ads proclaim that "movies are better than ever". And I hope that this is true. But in looking back at the movies we grew up with, and the guys we grew up with, the old days certainly had their charms. . . . I'll be seeing 'ya at the movies.

introducing



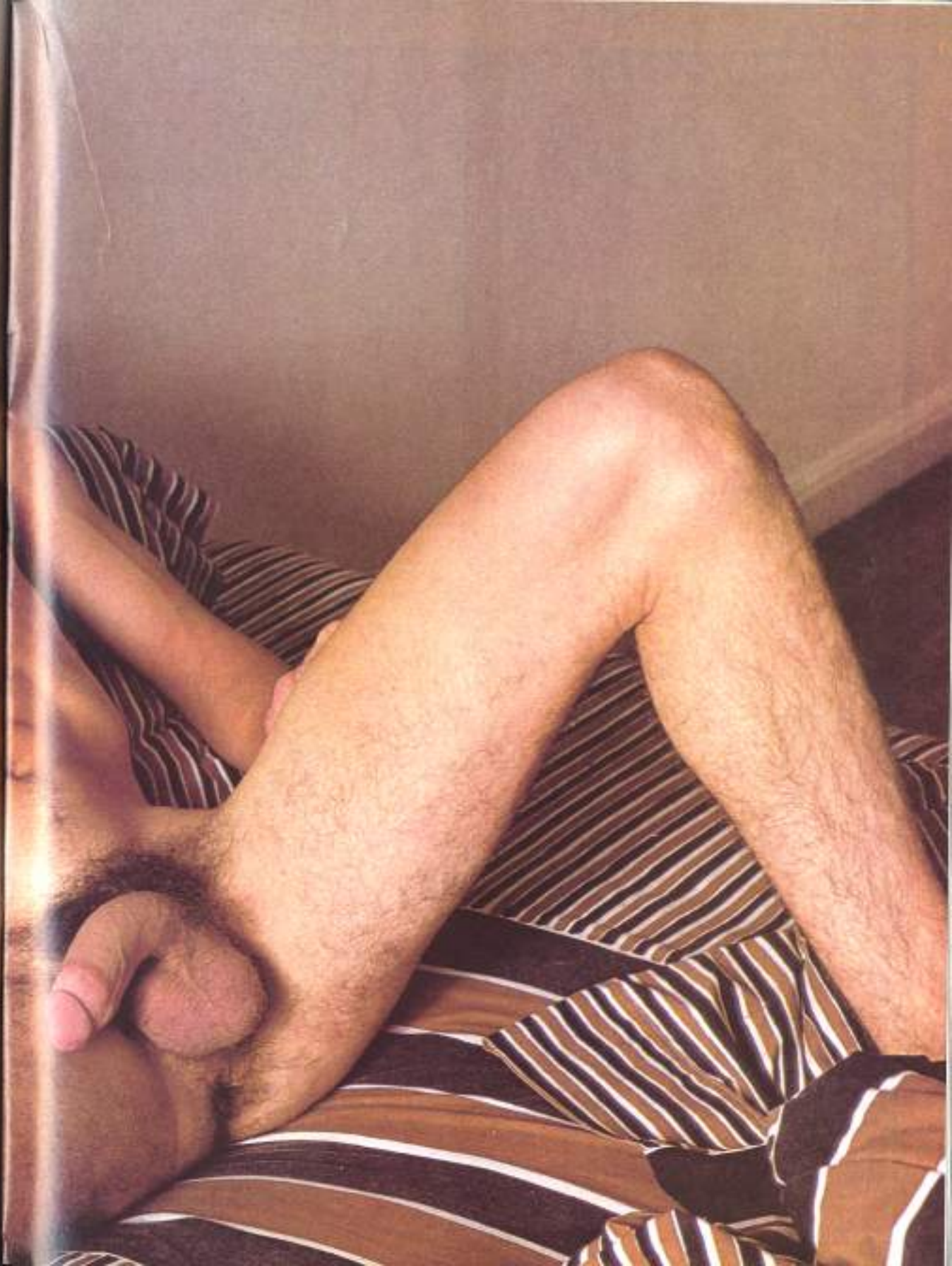
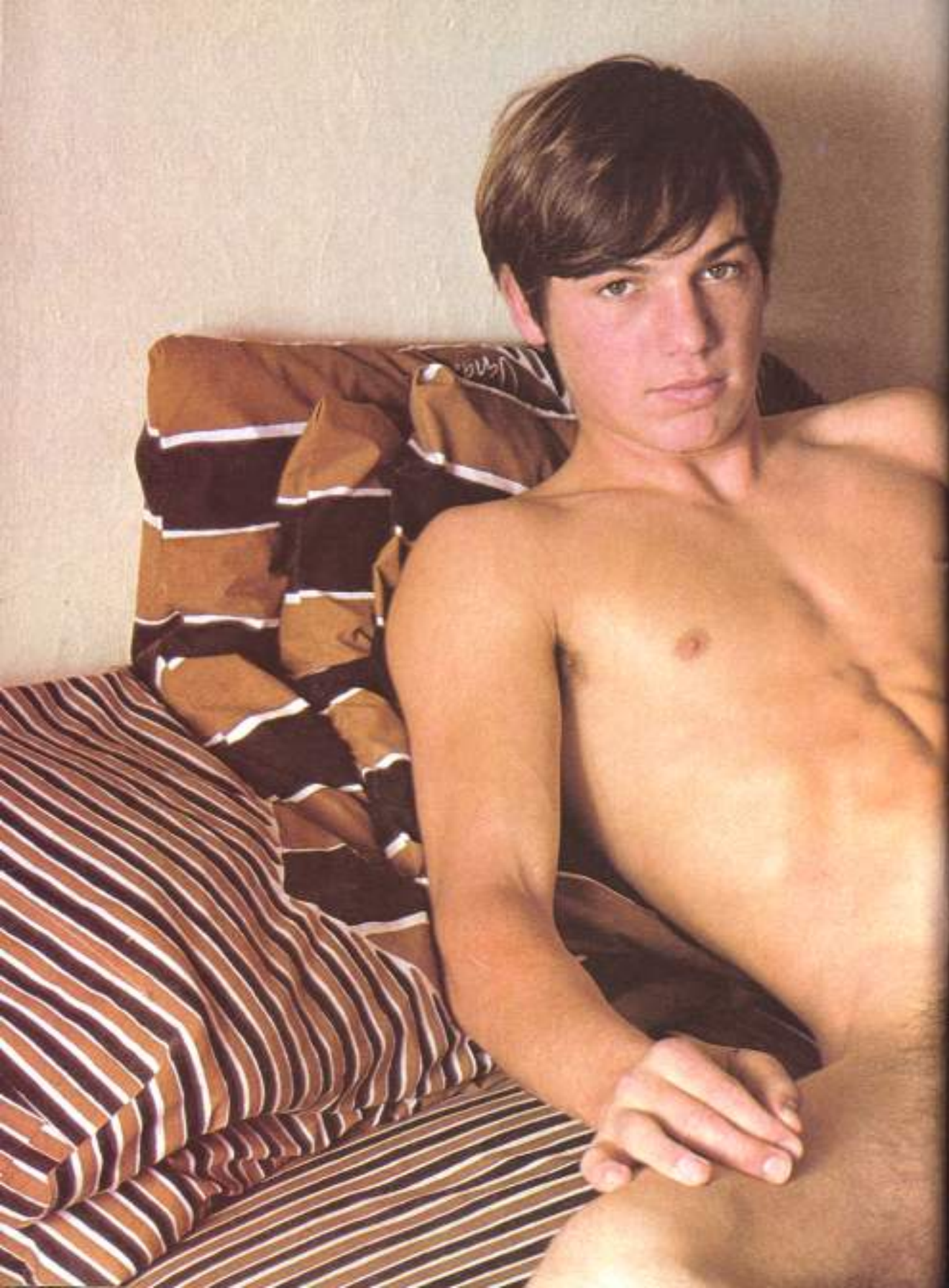
Bob Greene

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAY RICHARDS



"Nobody will believe I'm 24," Bob Greene says, plaintively. "It's a real hassle trying to go into a bar. I ask them if they'd like to see a note from my mother." Bob's a Chicago boy, a Gemini, and holds down two jobs in order to finish college. When he's not hitting the books on a Sunday morning, Bob can usually be found in bed taking full advantage of the "day of rest." His moments of being by himself are rare, though, and with a personality like Bob Greene's, it's not hard to understand why.





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MANSEX

(continued from page 45)

corded his intentions in "The Habit of Perfection", one of the most striking poems of renunciation and self-abnegation. He gave up the created world for the spiritual one, choosing the music of silence over that of sound and "uncreated light" over real, taking instead of human nourishment the bread of "fasts divine." There is a strongly marked masochistic element here, as in much of Hopkins' work. It must be assumed that he derived a spiritual, and perhaps a sexual, satisfaction from mortification and pain. He was suffering for Christ — and the great fear, never really laid to rest, was that this suffering was in vain.

In Hopkins' great religious poems, however, there is no sense of doubt. He is best remembered for wonderful celebrations of the multiple glories of the created world, such as "God's Grandeur" and "Pied Beauty." Hopkins was a great nature poet, in a line of descent from Wordsworth, and he had the artist's care to see a scene in all its specificity, its particular thingness or nature-into-itself, what Hopkins called its "inscape." Yet even in a religious poem such as "The Windover," in which the bird is an emblem of Christ, there is an aura of sexual excitement, a sense of the world's being charged," in Hopkins' phrase. In "The Windover" Hopkins sees himself as an observer of the exploits of the kestrel as it swings out to the end of its arc and returns—a symbol not so much of Christ as of a masculine action and daring: "My heart in hiding/ Stirred for a bird, — the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!" He apostrophises the bird as "Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume," making the abstract concrete and bringing all together in a magnificent impressionistic canvas of movement and color. At such moments Hopkins' Christ was a handsome Renaissance prince ("O my chevalier!").

But the religious life had its difficulties for Hopkins. He was never sure of the proper place of beauty — either the beauty of the artist or the beauty of the lover, perhaps because the two were so closely linked for him. He records in one late poem which is almost a journal entry, "To what serves mortal beauty — dangerous; does set dancing blood" and he indicated the way in which his own blood was set dancing by his association of ideas, as he turns to "Those lovely lads once, wet-fresh windfalls of war's

storm." The allusion is "proper" since he is explaining the origin of the term Angles for the English, as Pope Gregory's pun on angels. But more is surely revealed here than an erudite allusion. Hopkins found dangerous indeed the angelic beauty of his lads. While walking at night he would see a lantern and follow a "rare" young man: "Men go by me whom either beauty bright/ In mould or mind or what not else makes rare." But he concludes, they quickly disappear "and out of sight is out of mind." The cliché is a typical for Hopkins, and hardly convincing. Out of sight is more likely out of reach, but hardly out of mind.



Two poems record his sexual temptations as a priest. In one of them he offers a gift to a young boy:

*Mannerly-hearted! more
than handsome face —
Beauty's bearing or muse
of mounting vein,
All, in this case, bathed
in high hallowing grace*

and is delighted when the boy replies:
"Father, what you buy me I like
best." One can imagine many such
(continued on page 71)

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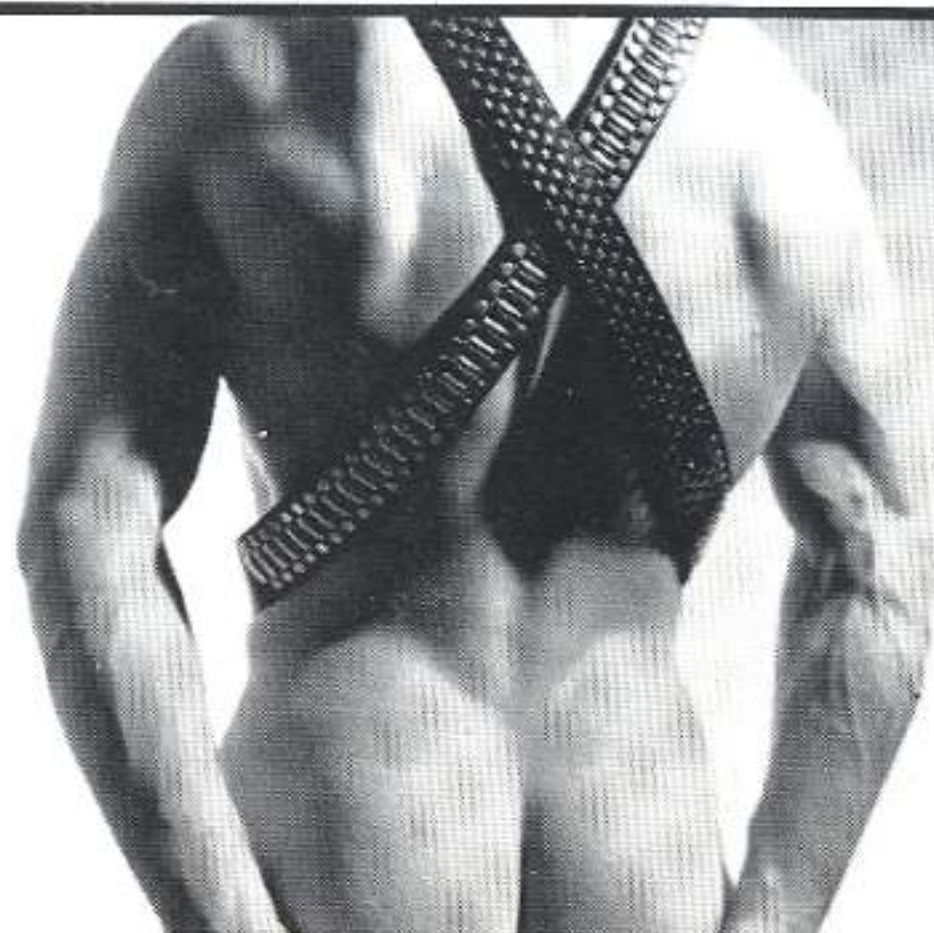
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FILM: A GAY ODYSSEY

(continued from page 27)

These were show biz people, and they wanted a climax, something to send them home happy.

Then the climax came. Joe Gage ordered: "Now I want all of you to make a lot of noise for the sound man. Just yell like hell. This is where you're watching Ox and Gene fight!" There arose such a clamor in the barroom as to arouse interest among passersby outside. There had already been some curiosity, because the neighbors knew the bar was closed. By this time, a crowd had gathered.

Georgina Spelvin, a superstar none of them could have recognized, stepped out to greet the inquisitive public. "We're making a dirty movie," she announced.

Inside, the company, having raised a terrific verbal ruckus for the sound track, was breaking up. The next scenes of *El Paso Wrecking Corp.* would be filmed after lunch, the location being a curious downtown building which contains some glory holes and which is accessible to porn makers who have friends inside, as the Gages have. Then, in mid-afternoon, the crew would assemble again in Joe Gage's house for a sequence in which two new actors, playing guys Hank and Gene encounter on the road, would piss all over each other — under "controlled conditions."

One of the last extras to leave the bar location was Mark Jeffries, a blond, handsome, well-spoken boy of 20, an acting student who has at least his share of brains and cool. He went to work on *El Paso* because somebody told him it was a movie and that he might be in it. While he and the others had been waiting around for the action to begin, Mark shot a little pool with a buddy, another of the company's casual pick-ups. Mark's smooth hand with the pool cue got him a bit on camera: his dunking a ball into a side pocket provided the downbeat for an elaborate, across-the-room panning shot which zeroed in to the confrontation among Hank, Gene, Billie and Ox.

So far as Mark knew, his face wouldn't appear in the scene. But if it does, that's okay with him. "I might even do a porno scene if they asked me," he remarked to an acquaintance on the set. "I'm sexually liberal." Did he know that young bloods like himself were being recruited for a gay orgy sequence to be filmed later? "No, but a lot of the people around here are into fantasy living. They trip on this kind

of work." Later, on the street, the friend asked Mark if he'd been recruited for the orgy. "No," he grinned. "But I made \$20 today by just shooting a pool ball!"

The Gages' tight shooting schedule anticipated that full days and evenings (past midnight) of work on Saturday and Sunday would leave all but a few key people free on Monday, Labor Day. This type of movie is usually shot entirely on weekends, anyway, it being presumed that nobody makes a living exclusively by doing porn flicks. But at midnight Saturday, following the elaborate sequence in which the young pair on the road express their affection by urinating onto (and briefly into) each other, the Gages and their cameraman parted company.

The tension between the cinematographer and Joe Gage had been growing since the previous night's preliminary shooting. It came to a head coincidental with filming the pissing scene. The man's work was regarded as excellent; he had shot *Falconhead*, an enigmatic, symbol-laden gay feature which was regarded in the field as short on point but long on cinema style. Nevertheless, something had happened, and there was no cameraman.

A replacement was available in the person of Nick Eliot, a boyishly likable young man who is a reputable commercial moviemaker as well as a veteran hand at gay porn. But a Sunday break had to be called while Eliot readied himself for the sudden assignment and the shooting schedule rearranged.

The respite, unwelcome as it was, gave Sam and Joe Gage time to articulate at length their goals for *El Paso Wrecking Corp.*, which were the aims they had in mind for *Kansas City Trucking Co.* In Joe's words: "What we're trying to do is establish, not necessarily a new kind of image for gay men, but our perception of an image. Masculine, in charge of themselves — an image that hasn't always been portrayed. There haven't been a lot of positive role models in film in general, and in gay films especially. There are an awful lot of those (masculine) men around whom no one has made use of before."

That brought up the subject of Richard Locke, a ruggedly handsome, bearded loner whose machismo would never be questioned if he didn't openly demonstrate a loving homosexual erotic drive in his screen work, which features an unlimited versatility. Locke has endeared himself to porn filmmakers

and public alike by his willingness to perform any scene he's asked to do. In *El Paso*, he was to get fucked and do a rim job, two chores some less masculine performers than he



Mike Morris gets ready for action in a scene from *El Paso Wrecking Corp.*

have proved unwilling to do before the camera.

"At one point," Sam Gage recalled, "I was visiting Richard, and a friend was with me. My friend asked him, 'How come you do these pictures?' He said, 'I do them for

the money, and also because I get off on giving... I have a commitment to the gay community... I get off on giving these people across the country a more substantial and masculine image to emulate. I'm lucky enough to have that, and if other people can feel more positive about themselves because of an image I helped create, I feel good about that.' And that's the way Joe and I feel in general.

"We made some mistakes with *Kansas City*, some miscalculations, for all it's such a hit. I think now it was too heavy. Some of the sex was mechanical, almost heartless. We found that audiences had trouble figuring out which were the fantasy scenes and which were intended to be realistic. The only criticism we received in a couple of reviews was that there was no romance, no tenderness. Well, *Kansas City* wasn't about tenderness. In *El Paso*, somewhere along the line we wanted that kind of contact that wasn't solely sexual, that had some romantic connotation."

The two are proud that there is no "forced" sex in either picture. Nobody in the plot is taken advantage of, nobody is tricked into it. "What they do, they do of their own free will, and they leave satisfied and happy."

Indeed, the central theme of both Gage films is that these butch road guys are perfectly natural, healthy fellows who express themselves sexually in the way they like. The Gages may or may not see themselves as gay activists. But their message runs parallel to that which organized gay groups have traditionally tried to present, with less than total success.

Besides offering a viable, positive position in both pictures, the Gages are riding an exhilarating streak of success. Even though shooting on *El Paso* was set back one precious day because of the cameraman problem, things were breaking beautifully for them. The sincerity of their performers was a major lucky break. And *Kansas City*, in engagements across the country, was making its mark as a classic of its kind. But more than anything else, unexpected and felicitous things were happening in routine situations.

How lucky a picture *El Paso* might turn out to be was hinted to the cast and crew the following Sunday, during what shaped up as a tedious outdoor location in East Los Angeles. It was the last major shooting on the film and, from the plot viewpoint, its climax.

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Hank and Gene have made the leisurely drive through Oklahoma and West Texas, headed for El Paso, where Gene knows of a wrecking crew whose employer will take them on. The drive was leisurely because they stopped over for some sexual dalliance — Gene with an inexperienced young gas station mechanic whom he seduces with dream-like ease, Hank with a park ranger he meets during a lonely stroll in the wilderness while he's waiting for Gene to finish it off with the boy.

Now they're in El Paso, reporting for work at the wrecking yard. The boss presents them to the foreman, a snarling son-of-a-bitch who, when he comes into camera view, proves to be the very same Ox they'd disposed of so emphatically at the barbecue joint way back there. Ox attacks. Gene fights back. Gene flattens Ox to the cheers of the crewmen, who hated Ox anyway. Gene is offered the foreman's job. In the midst of all this, Gene has his restless eye on the boss' college boy son, a really luscious kid whose gaze indicates that he can be had. (Gene makes him easily, of course, and finds the boy, Seth, an extraordinarily receptive sex partner. But that's another scene, done at Joe's home under controlled conditions.)

The location was a real wrecking yard the Gages obtained through a movie industry connection who knows about such filming arrangements. What occupied the company that hot, hazy afternoon was the staging of the showdown brawl and the business of simulating hard, rough wreckers' work. For these scenes, a few new performers showed — friends of friends, some of them only vaguely aware of what kind of a flick they were working on. Not that it would matter; it's an afternoon's work for some otherwise unoccupied fellows; and some people find the lure of the camera irresistible.

The going was slow, what with the tedium of moving frequently from one set-up to another — the dusty yard was vast and strewn with odds and ends of commercial debris — and the lassitude brought on by an outdoor lunch of sandwiches and beer under the relentless southern California sun. A key sequence was shot in the cab of a truck. Locke, as the steady buddy Hank, was warning the heedless Halsted against trying to put the make on the employer's vulnerable young son. His line was: "There ain't a horse that can't be rode, nor a cowboy that can't be throwed." The usually imperturbable Locke fluffed it: "There

ain't a cowboy that can't be roped..." He tried again and again, even consulting his script for the word order. It got worse as Locke became impatient with himself. Then, when he finally and triumphantly delivered the line correctly, Halsted, who was to alight easily from the cab at that point, tripped and sprawled to the ground. He got a big laugh from the crew. But it was a frustrating moment for the Gages, who had much left to accomplish before sundown.

Then an amazing thing happened. A huge, unanticipated hauling truck drove into the yard and directly to the scene of the filming. A real-life trucker was delivering used bricks for dumping exactly on the spot where the moviemakers were working.

Finding himself on a movie location, and with the camera on him, the grinning driver followed cameraman Nick Eliot's jubilant hand signals. The cast scurried around the truck, shouting orders and more or less supervising the dumping. The rough clamor and gritty realism of the sequence amused and delighted the Gages and everybody else there. And the action spurred the performers to realistic new efforts as they busied themselves fooling around in the rubble of broken bricks.

It was a marvelous touch, all the more so because the token rental the Gages paid for the yard encompassed no such cooperation. "I love your \$10,000 prop," Nick Eliot chortled to Joe Gage. The trucker waved goodbye to his fellow performers as he drove off. Then the sun, which had been oppressive in a smoggy sky, mellowed in its declining hour. Gene, who had gotten itchy again, impulsively decided to hit the road for new adventures. Hank chose to stay on. Their underplayed, almost tender farewells to each other were played in a rich, deep sunset hue exactly suited to the parting mood of those two rough-and-tumble buddies whom the audience would know by now were, in their macho way, each other's true love.

Packing their cars and van for the trip back to town, the fellows got a word of thanks from Sam Gage. "Thank God you guys didn't camp it up too much out here," he grinned. "The owner of the yard, who's been sitting in the office over there watching us, thinks we're making a student film. We just let him go on thinking that."

The fantasy mood of the whole filming adventure had held up, right to the end.

MANSEX (continued from page 66)

flirtatious scenes between the intellectual priest and his rural parishioners. But the most striking record of Hopkins' strange fusing of his priestly role with a sexual one is contained in "The Bugler's First Communion," a superb piece of sexual fantasy. The bugler boy is Hopkins' pederastic delight: "Tongue true, vaunt—and tauntless;/ Breathing bloom of a chastity in mansex fine." Hopkins offers him religious instruction in the most erotic lines he ever composed:

*How it does my heart good,
visiting at that bleak hill,
When limber liquid youth, that
to all I teach
Yields tender as a pushed
peach, . . .
Hies headstrong to its wellbeing
of a self-wise self-will!*

The extraordinary metaphor — a pushed peach — reveals how religious instruction became an act of sexual penetration for Hopkins. As other mystics have spoken of being fucked by God, Hopkins here fucks for God. He then offers the "royal ration" of communion and the "sealing sacred ointment" of confirmation. The act of love through the entry of the boy into the church "locks love ever in a lad," and so he is preserved in his innocence and protected against the world of adult sexuality against whose claims Hopkins fought.

One of the very last poems Hopkins wrote, and could not finish, was an "Epithalamion" (or Wedding Song) for the marriage of his brother. The subject was undoubtedly a delicate one for the priest-poet, since it could hardly fail to remind him of his own sexuality and the ways in which it had determined that he would not marry. In it Hopkins reveals how deeply he missed the secular world, and what a terrible price the life of the cloister had exacted. The poem is a magnificent evocation of the joys of boyhood and summer, reminiscent of the poems of Hopkins' earlier days and of a world he had now renounced forever. Still, it is extraordinary that he should have composed such an obviously homosexual poem as a wedding gift. The poem, even in its fragmentary state, is one of Hopkins' finest. It demonstrates his word play at its most exuberant and inventive. We are in "some branchy bunchy bushybowered wood" which is set "along the loin of hills". There is suddenly a shout and "the riot of

a rout": "Boys from the town/ Bathing: it is summer's sovereign good."

Into this scene comes unseen a "listless stranger", clearly Hopkins himself. Overwhelmed by the boys' pleasure and the "summertime joys," he too decides to join in and goes to "a pool neighboring" where he strips and enters the water, "Where we leave him, froliclavish, while he looks about him, laughs, swims." Here, of course, is where the poem should end, revealing as it does Hopkins' considerable indebtedness to Whitman and "Song of Myself" with its famous scene of the young men bathing. But Hopkins cannot end his poem there, for he must recall that his poem is to be an epithalamion and that he is a priest. So he attempts to turn to the "sacred matter" and claims that the water is a symbol of "spousal love". He was never able to get beyond that statement, so obviously false to his entire poem. At the very end, his analogic capacity seems to have failed him, and that failure was symptomatic of the collapse of the entire structure of his life. He had chosen to see the world as a mirror of God, and thus his poems must also be mirrors of the divine. And what is gay love the mirror of? Hopkins could not ever entertain that question.

Hopkins is an important illustration of the ways in which religion has operated to repress sexuality and human freedom. He turned to religion because of its barely concealed eroticism, particularly evident in the Catholic and Anglo-Catholic cult of the beautiful crucified Christ and his sorrowing mother Mary. He yearned for a voluptuous martyrdom. He imagined himself as a nun, a bride of Christ. But always there was the memory of Digby Dolben, only barely assuaged with the hope that they might be reunited in heaven. And always there were the lads — the boys in scarlet coats and with "mansex fine." He was their priest — and he wanted to be so much more. The Church has always had its "homosexual celibates", whose sexual preference has been tolerated as long as it was unexpressed. Hopkins chose his "winter world" and lived to find it far from bliss. In the end he yearned to shed his vestments and step naked into the center of the boys as they

*with down-dolphinry and bell-bright bodies huddling out
Are earthworld, airworld, water-world through hurled, all
by turn and turn about.*

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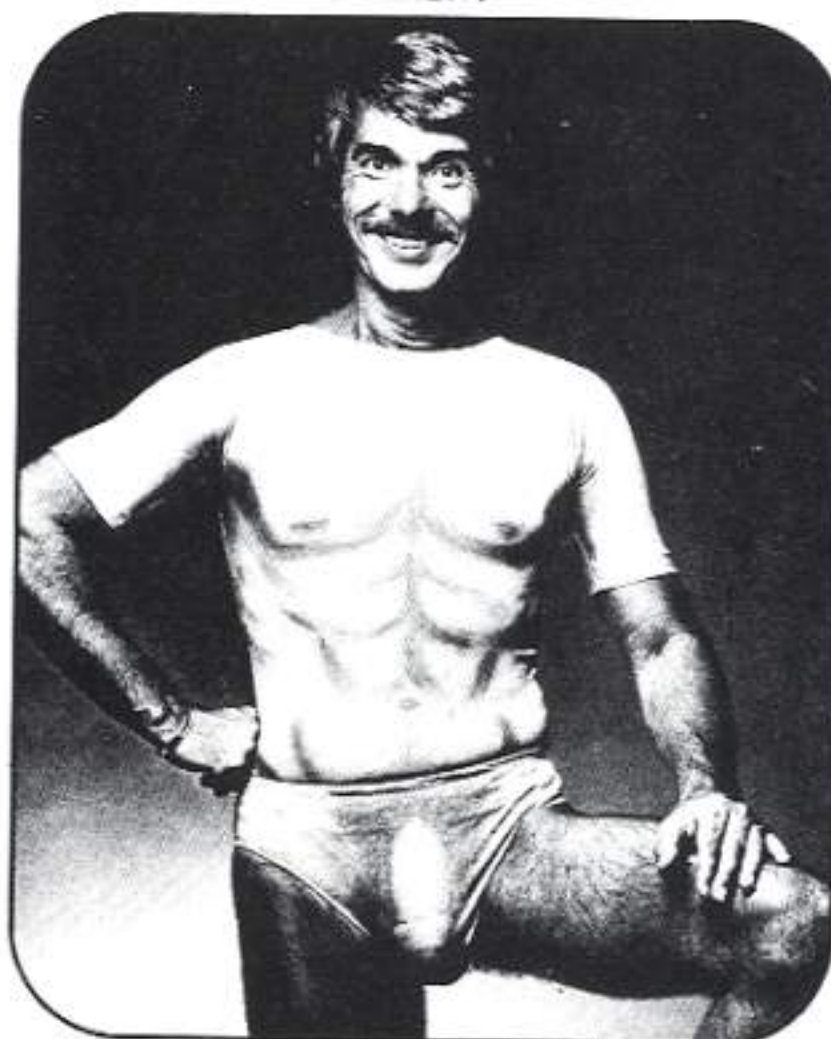
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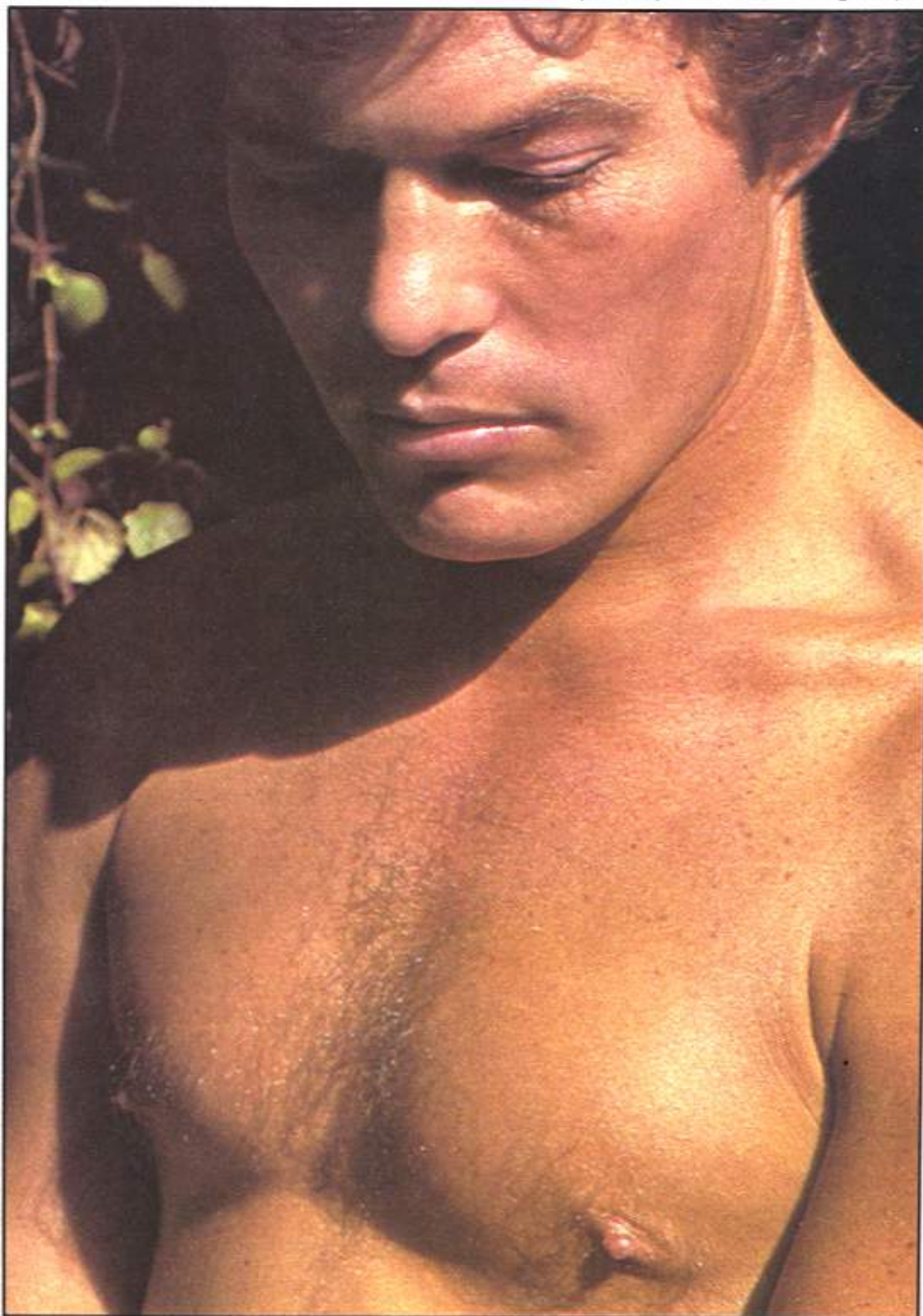
His skin has the glow of a reflected sunset and his voice the honeyed echos of those Virginia hills where he grew up as a farmboy "milking cows, slopping pigs, and pulling tobacco — a real hillbilly!" He acts, sings dances, dresses hair, paints, writes, and, with a partner, has just formed a production company. Grandmother Poe would say that young Eugene Allan "has many irons in the fire," and he hasn't yet finished adding to them. "I have too much energy and too much drive to just gear it into one thing," Gene acknowledges, adding: "And my mind won't stop for a moment. Nor will my mouth, as you will see!"

Then, at the ripening age of 27, Gene Poe summarizes his event-filled life by admitting "I haven't tried everything, but I've tried a lot, and I have no regrets about *anything*." This obviously includes having been the cover boy on our very first issue of IN TOUCH, back in Oct. 1973, which came about (as have so many key events in Gene's life) through the sheer "luck" that always seems to favor those with his particular combination of determination and grit. "I had just come to Hollywood, and this particular photographer happened to live on the same block I lived on.

From Virginia tobacco fields to Hollywood cover boy for Gene Poe has been an outrageously circuitous odyssey. It all began calmly enough when his mother, sensing he had unusual talents, persuaded a reluctant husband to excuse their teenage son from work in the fields one summer in order to take art lessons in "the big city"—Lynchburg. But once ensconced there at the Fine Arts Center, the

"Finally," he recalls, "when I was watching them working on *Kiss Me, Kate*, the aggressive woman director from New York just took me and put me in the chorus. And that's all it took. Ever since then I've been stage-struck. I love the attention and the applause and — you name it!" His mouthful of Donny Osmond teeth open in a booming laugh. "I mean, you don't get applause at home pulling tobacco!"

The garrulous Capricorn ("I've got all the traits!") gestures flamboyantly, each and every thought punctuated with an appropriate physical movement as he perches, beige-clad legs widespread, on the edge of the sofa. Reflecting on the taste of celebrity he enjoyed in high school from his theatrical endeavors, he turns briefly serious at an accompanying memory: "All my friends were going to college, but I, of course, didn't have the money to go. So, I announced I was going to college. And my family said 'fine and good, if



you can work your way through.'

"And that's what I did. I won a scholarship because I was *male*. I walked into the shop, and the owner instantly gave me the scholarship because it was very unusual to have a male hairdresser back in that neck of the woods. Of course, my father went right through the ceiling! But my mom was thrilled — it meant getting her hair done for free. I spent three months training, then the rest of the nine months I was out on the floor, booked solid. And I was just a kid, just out of high school!

"Then I was offered a job with the beauty company that owned the school and was sent to their main school in Richmond, just after I'd applied to the Drama Department there at Virginia Commonwealth University. So instantly I had a job that would pay for my schooling! And I was just 18! And, up the street was the biggest beauty salon in the city — 23 hairdressers — and one day the owner stopped me on the street and said 'I hear you're the teacher at the beauty school' and made me an offer I couldn't refuse. So I left the beauty school and was able to pursue directing and acting at college. I was doing so well that I lived a lifestyle in college that even today I haven't achieved yet, moneywise."

Gene won awards in college for both acting and directing, and somehow found the time to appear in dinner theaters around the Richmond area, always cast, not surprisingly, as the All-American boy-next-door, "apple pie in one hand and the flag in the other." It was an image he came to hate, and, in rebellion, he let his hair grow long, cultivated a moustache, and — prophetically — even had his right ear pierced. "If I said 'fuck' or 'shit' people would just fall over," he remembers ruefully, toying with a splash of diamonds on his wedding-ring finger.

He suddenly brightens. "Then — and this is going to shatter everything I just told you — I got the part of the hustler in *Boys in the Band* and went on tour with that through several eastern states. This was when I announced to the man that I'd been working for that this was the end of my beauty career as a hairdresser, and he was just shattered. No more 'Mister Eugene.' I needed freedom. And, since *The National Geographic*

had done a whole number on my head, I decided I wanted to go to Europe and see it now or else I'd never see it.

"So I broke with everything and took off with a pack on my back for Europe, and for a whole year I had just one adventure after another. Every young person should go to Europe. It just blows you away!" There followed an instructive dissertation on the traumas and triumphs of being an "Amurrican" in Europe, circa 1970, and Gene has to be nudged back on the track of the interview.

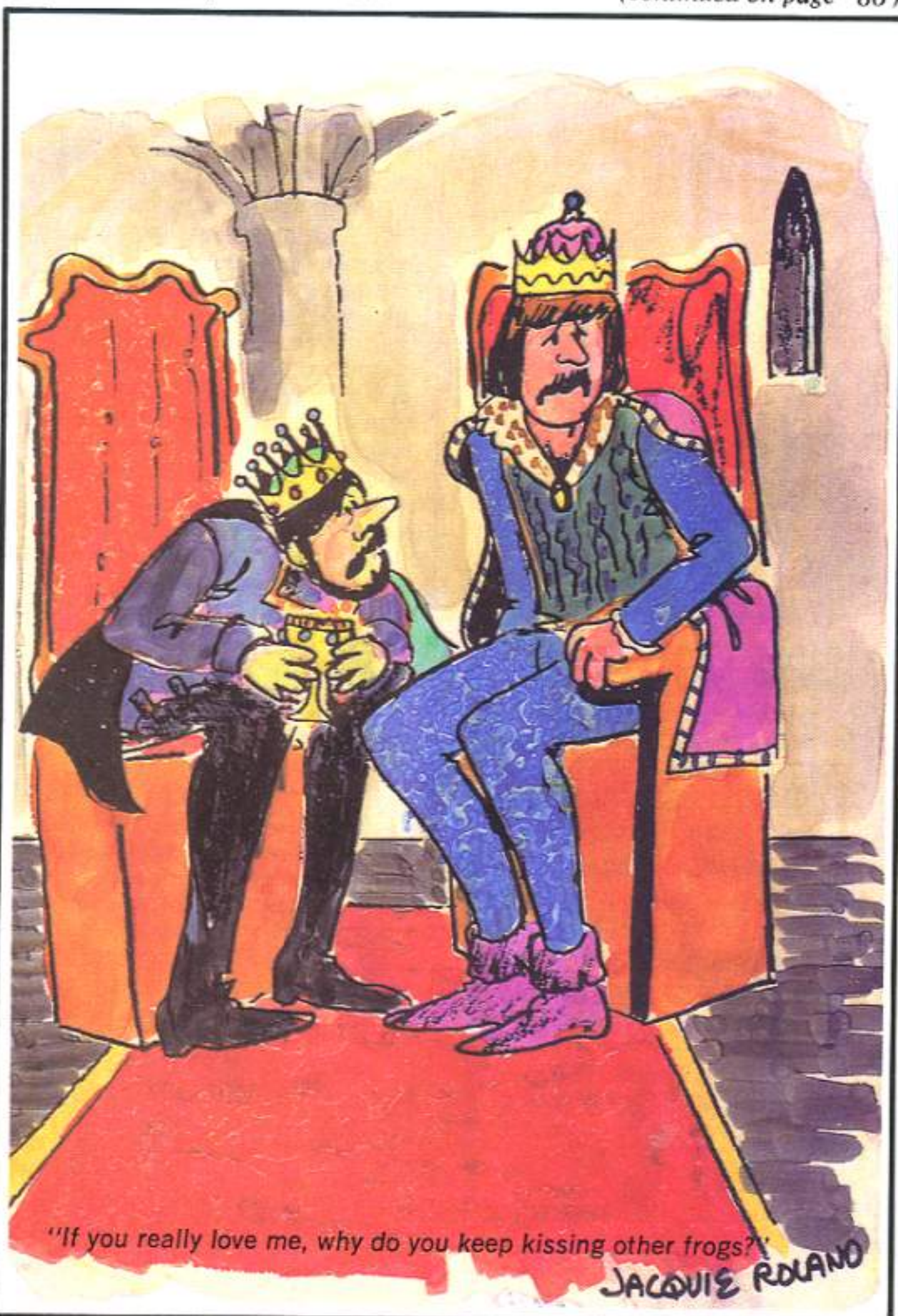
A sudden decision made in Amsterdam led him to go to London to study acting at The Guild Hall. At a stage door one night he introduced

himself to Corin Redgrave, "and just in conversation I got a job from him being his personal dresser. My life is full of crazy little things like this.

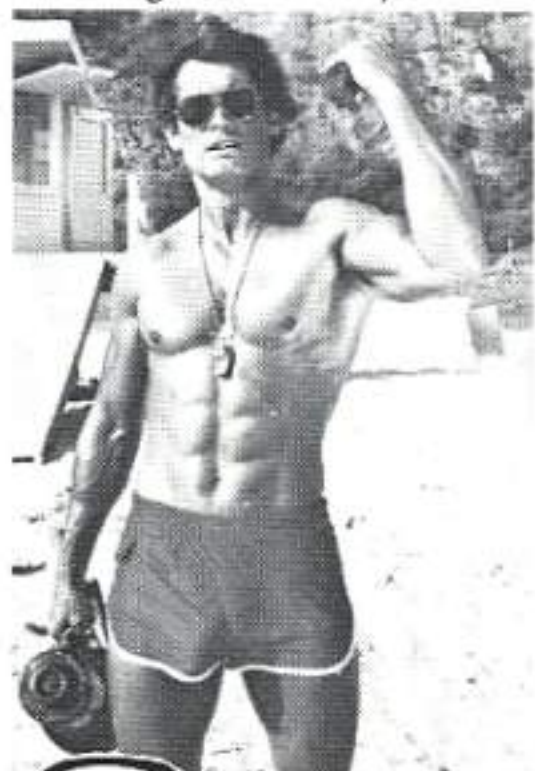
There was nothing sexual between us at all: the only thing he was interested at that time was the Socialist Party!"

But studying all day and working all night on an income of only 30 pounds a week wasn't all beer and skittles. It was, in fact, all fish and chips, and Gene "got very sick. I almost O.D'd. on fish and chips. I went to a doctor and he told me that either I had to go to the hospital or I had to go home and let my family take care of me. So I came back to visit with my family. But a very successful Hollywood director I had

(continued on page 86)



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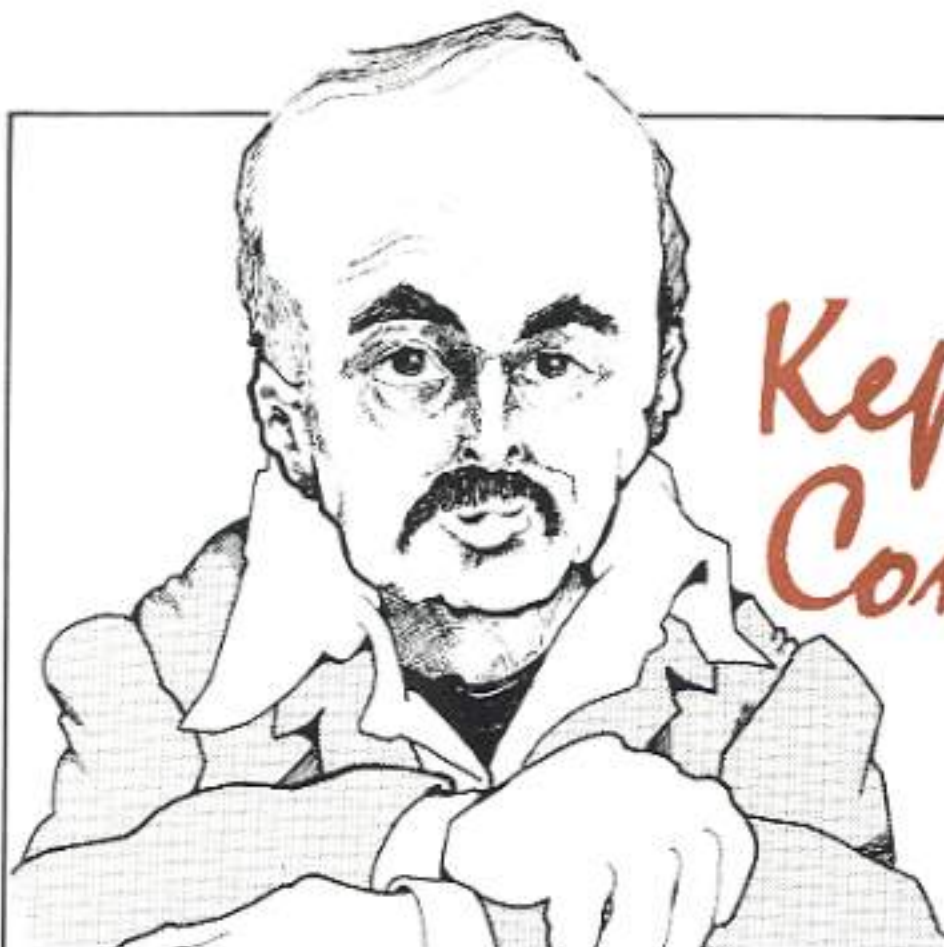
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Kepler's
Comments

Gays are repeatedly charged (by implication, though almost never in fact) with molesting and seducing the nation's children. We can't reproduce, Anita says — where do the new gays come from? Failing to recognize us as a universal by-product of hetero life, she insists we must seduce children who'd otherwise be hetero.

But many gays *do* procreate, and the vast majority are physically capable of it. The perennial crop of new gays rarely needs or experiences seduction.

Gays who work with children are less likely than their hetero peers to seduce their charges. Most gays learn restraint early and know the dangers of such acts. Many (still regarding gayness as a cross to bear) would never encourage a youngster to be gay.

Child molesting in its many forms is an almost exclusively hetero practice — sex contacts being a minor part of the picture. Police figures show such contacts to be heterosexual 9-1, usually involving friends or family, even though same-sex contacts are likelier to be reported. Men who would gladly lynch a friend for fondling a boy will themselves casually caress a younger girl — even Calif.'s homophobic Sen. Briggs defended this at a press conference. And don't women also "fondle" strange children? Actually, sex experience rarely harms children, nor does sex with a man turn a boy gay.

Gays are novices at child molesting. Most pederastic men see themselves as hetero, and are usually fathers. Heteros stone us to cover their own guilt about the pederasty inherent in family life — parents who show off their children to prove their own fecundity, who use their children as sexual pawns in the struggle with their spouses.

The heaviest molestation is child abuse — parents, especially religious ones, beating, mutilating, thwarting, starving and intimidating their children. 50,000 child abuse cases were reported to police in California last year, and far more went unreported. Even police who express such horror at the existence of male hustlers admit that these often unhappy youths fled from intolerable parental brutality and insensitivity, first finding gentle understanding in the arms of some boy-lover.

Can anyone miss the intimidation Anita presents as a "model parent?" The only "freedom of choice" she offers her brood is to follow her narrow demands. The heaviest seduction/molestation children suffer is their parents' socially-hallowed view that children are property, medals of honor, fields in which to work out thwarted ambitions.

The worst threat to the American family comes not from our existence (though some gays are total critics of the family) but from the unnaturalness of the nuclear family in today's fluid society, from youth's revolt against unlimited parental control. Neither children nor wives are chattel, and their revolt cannot be blamed on gays.

Still, it is only outworn, inhumane and authoritarian concepts of the family which are under serious attack. Sick families — those whited sepulchres of false morality — have crippled thousands of gays and others, so it is not surprising that many gays resent all that "the family" stands for.

Not all families cripple their children, but far too many do. Heteros as a class should examine the countless examples of their own molested, damaged and stunted children and stop scapegoating gays for the really rare cases of homosexual child molesting.

SINCERE, DISCREET

(continued from page 31)

had wandered up the Yellow Brick Road.

"Yes! Surprise!" The small one cried in delight. Talk about truth in advertising! If this baby-faced little elf ever saw 39 again, it would be from the wrong direction. If he was 6', eighteen inches of it must be that "well-endowed" business, because this little character was standing under the fern.

"You — your'e Gaffer?"

"Yes, you wrote such a nice letter, and you sounded so good over the telephone, I *had* to meet you." He patted my arm.

"But . . . but you're . . . you're not . . . well, uh . . ."

"Not what my ad said? No. But Charles, who'd have answered if I'd described myself as I really am?"

He had a point there. "Do you do this often?" I managed to say.

"Oh, yes. And I meet some of the *nicest* men this way, too. I hope we'll become *good* friends." He fluttered his tiny eyelashes at me.

Don't plan on it, Sweetie, I thought. "But don't some people become . . . well . . . angry?"

"Yes, now and then. But Charles, who would want to hurt someone like me?" (I could think of *one* who

would like to.) "Besides, I can always reveal their, shall we say, *secret*."

The little rat! I was in his clutches, too, what with the photograph and the letters.

We talked for some time during which I learned that Gaffer never "did anything" with men. He just "enjoyed their company," and always met them in public places. Wise of him, I thought. In fact, that cherub was married and had five daughters. Proudly he showed me a photograph of himself and his family. The daughters weren't bad, rather plain and sweet-looking, but Mrs. Gaffer looked like an angry Andy Devine in drag. One or the other of them had made rather ample use of his endowment. Gaffer was, actually, Greek, but who cared?

He was always very careful in selecting his "contacts," choosing only those who wrote "nice letters," and were "discreet." "I *never* meet truckers or anyone *rough* like that."

"Do you always use the same wording in your ads?" I asked.

"Oh, no. I change it and then. Some times I'm blond and hung, or virile and uncut. I pick out descriptions from other ads. Always attractive, you know."

"Well, the next time you write

an ad," I suggested, "why don't you include 'passive Greek'? That ought to attract an interesting group. You know how artistic Greeks are."

"Oh, really?" He sounded enthusiastic. "I believe I will. What does 'passive' mean?"

"Oh, it just means that you're interested in the past. You know, history and things."

"Wonderful," he enthused. "Well, I really must go now. My wife expects me home. *Do* call me sometime. I might call you, too. After all" (significantly), "I *do* have your number, Charles."

"Do that," I said insincerely, as he walked away and into the eddying buffaloes.

Perhaps the Satin One was still in the crowd. What was he doing there anyway? He might be good for a drink or whatever.

Sure enough, there he was — just going out the door with Hippo Hips in the big, pink hat. Well, that ought to keep him thin, but would it be worth all that for a few gold coins?

Wearily, I made my way through the butting buffaloes. On the way home, I began to compose my own ad in my mind:

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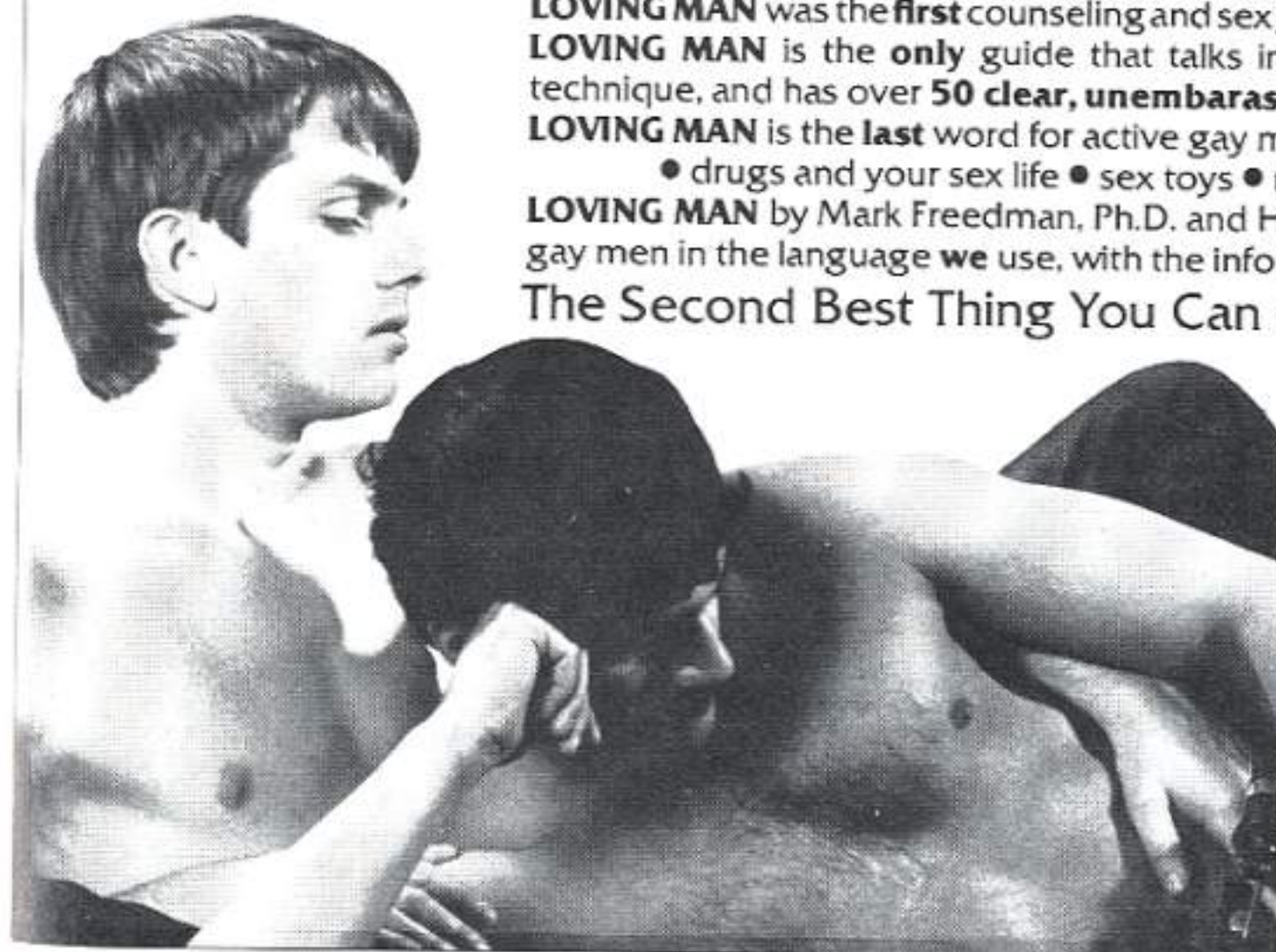
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WORLD REPORTS

BERLIN

At thirty-five (and whatever some American critics think of him), John Neumeier, hailing from Milwaukee and now in his fifth year as Artistic Director of the Hamburg State Opera Ballet, is undoubtedly the most envied and successful European choreographer of the under-forties generation. He has just concluded the Third Hamburg Ballet Days, concentrated this year on 'Shakespeare and the Ballet,' with his brand-new full-length *Midsummer Night's Dream*, a Shakespeare Ballet Gala (including Erik Bruhn, Cynthia Gregory, Ivan Nagy and Sally Wilson in Jose Limon's *The Moor's Pavane*) and a ceremony in which Margot Fonteyn was awarded the internationally highly respected Hamburg Shakespeare Prize.

This came just as the climax of a very busy season for him, starting with his taking his Hamburg company on a guest-visit to Israel. Followed the Stuttgart revival of his *Hamlet: Connotations* — as successful with Stuttgart audiences as it was a flop at its New York Ballet Theatre premiere. But this was nothing against the sensational success he scored at the Vienna State Opera with Richard Strauss's notorious *Legend of Joseph*, with a rejuvenated Judith Jamison and sky-rocketing Kevin Haigen, an American from Neumeier's Hamburg troupe, in the title role. This he followed with *The Fourth Symphony*, which refers to Mahler's Fourth, which he choreographed for the Covent Garden contingent of the Royal Ballet. Wayne Sleep, Lynn Seymour and David Wall in the leads — succinctly telling of the growing-up pains of a boy. Then, just before the Hamburg Ballet Days, he took his company on a visiting spree to Poland, to the Florence Maggio Musicale and the Vienna Festival.

The 1977/78 season he is going to start with his first opera production: Verdi's *Otello* for the Munich State Opera. He will follow this with *The Sleeping Beauty* for his Hamburg company, which he is also going to use in his new production of Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice*. He then plans to revive his Gluck *Don Juan* ballet for the Vienna State Opera, and the same season will see

another full-length ballet creation for the Stuttgart Ballet, probably on the *Dame aux camelias* subject, from which he has to rush back to Hamburg for his Fourth Hamburg



American choreographer John Neumeier of the Hamburg Ballet makes a point.

Ballet Days, including another premiere of his resident company. After which the next big step ahead for him seems to be the creation of a major work for the Salzburg Festival.

Not a bad record for a young American who made it in Europe — via the Royal Ballet School and the Stuttgart Ballet, after which he served his first ballet-directorship in Frankfurt. In Hamburg he is considered a sort of ballet miracle boy by a very large group of followers, who flock to his Sunday workshops, established to introduce the audience to the problems of today's ballet productions. Regular performances are almost always sold out.

What actually makes him such a big success is his very loose integration of drama, choreography, music and production, which always ensures a brilliantly intelligent, distinctly contemporary theater experience — which of course holds very often true of Bejart's productions, too, though with Neumeier there is always the guarantee of some versatile high-quality choreography.

Already there are two books dealing with him — neither of them, however, daring to dig into the basic gayness underlying so many of his creations, and most obviously coming to the fore in his controversial production of *Illusions* — *Like Swan Lake*, which equalizes Prince Siegfried with Ludwig II, King of Bavaria, granting him redemption only after the shedding of illusions of ever marrying a woman and accepting, finally, his true nature.

In private, Neumeier, who is a very attractive guy who still looks like a danseur noble able to star at any moment in one of his ballets, is an extremely discreet man — stunningly intelligent and highly articulate, hypersensitive and thin-skinned (which makes it difficult even for the most positive critics to maintain a working relationship with him). One can't imagine him openly speaking of his homosexuality, let alone 'coming out.' However, as one sees him rarely in public without being accompanied by his friend, who is a well-known German theater and TV actor, everybody is invited to draw his own conclusions.

—Michael Hillier

PARIS

Any Frenchman given half the chance will tell you how marvelous Paris is. A Frenchman will tell you that Paris is the most beautiful city in the world, that it has the most beautiful, best-dressed people, the best system of government, the best metro system, the best wine. In fact, if Paris doesn't have it, it's not worth having. Now, most of this poppycock is pure fantasy; but when a Frenchman tells you that Paris has the best food, he ain't just whistling Dixie. Food in Paris is a visual and delectable delight.

L'Attrape Coeur (9 rue Christine) doesn't look like much from the outside, particularly in broad daylight when it is boarded up. But once inside, when the sun goes down, it's a small, cosy, attractively decorated restaurant serving some of the best food in Paris. The clientele is mostly gay but this is no reason for going there nor is it a reason for not going there. It's the food and, of course, Alain Philponet, the owner—who is not only nice to look at but who falls all over himself trying to meet his customers' demands. He gives the impression that there is absolutely nothing he wouldn't do for you (there is), and his smile is a definite asset. His waiters are attractive, too, and very efficient. A full meal from soup to nuts will cost between 60 and 80 francs and worth every franc. The steak à la moutarde is particularly good. Reservations: 033-4342. Closed Sundays.

Le Bistro du Port (13 Quai Montebello) is another popular eating establishment with gay crowd. Located in the Latin Quarter just opposite Notre Dame, it has a turn-of-the-century decor and boasts a fine menu of delicious items that are hard to beat, including a wide variety of savory steaks. For starters, I recommend the Salad Bistro. Dinners will run between 60 and 80 francs. Reservations: 033-8106. Closed Mondays.

The owners of *Le Bistro du Port*, Gerard and Garard, also run a magnificent restaurant thirty minutes from Paris called **Les Quatre Saisons**, and this is not a restaurant to be missed. Unfortunately, you need a car or someone who has a car to get out there. So I suggest you rent a car for the day and drive out there. Go out on the weekend and go for lunch. Make sure it's a warm sunny day, and sit out in the garden under an awning and sip a cocktail — leisurely, there's no rush

here — before ordering your meal, which will be excellent no matter what you choose. It's quite packed on the weekends, especially in summer, so you must reserve (469-2000). After lunch you can relax on the sweeping green lawns behind the restaurant and spend the entire afternoon if you want. Or you can visit the little village in which the restaurant is located, just across from the town hall. The village is called Nerville-La-Forêt; and bring a map. It's almost as hard to find as a needle in a haystack.

Another place that has to be seen to be believed is the **Rocambole**, which is also about a half hour outside Paris but much easier to find than *Les Quatre Saisons*. Just take Route 99 until you come to Villecresnes. It's right on the highway and has a stone wall around it and two guys at the entrance who check you out as you enter. They generally just ask you if you have reservations. I don't know what they do if you say you haven't. Once on the phone a voice asked me if I knew what kind of establishment the *Rocambole* was. I said that I did and that was why I was calling. The *Rocambole* is not just a restaurant but it also serves as a disco bar; and it's the hottest place in or around Paris. There's a set menu here (about \$9.00) so you more or less have to take what you get. But that's no problem 'cause the food is always good and much better than a lot of gay restaurants in New York that I won't mention. Jean Pierre, the host and owner, is a veritable ball of fire, bouncing around like a puppet on a string. He seems to be everywhere at once, and is absolutely indefatigable. Every night, I swear, is like New Year's Eve. Not only do you get a free cocktail before dinner, but around midnight Jean Pierre and his staff (some in drag) distribute noise-makers, whistles and paper hats; and more often than not you'll get another free drink.

There are two dance floors, two bars, a lounge and a TV room, but things don't swing until around midnight, when everybody does. The music is mostly loud American rock. The place is teeming and sweaty and hot with boy-to-boy carpeting and the cruising is easy. (Groping, I understand, is permitted.) If you want a fun evening, this is the place. You won't be disappointed. You'll even like Jean Pierre. He grows on you. Not a place for wallflowers.

These are my favorite places in Paris; and I hope you check them out next time you come on over. There are, however, "restaurants"

— if you can call them that — that should be avoided at all cost. MacDonald's heads the list. What burns my ass is that Parisiens are now lining up to get inside and taste the junk food that Americans are so fond of. If you come to Paris and go to MacDonald's you should be shot. Other waterholes equally unappetizing are Whimpy's, Jacques Borrel and the Hippopotamus. There are hundreds of good, reasonable restaurants in Paris, so there simply is no excuse for patronizing one of those stomach-wreckers that are sprouting up everywhere like poisonous mushrooms.

— Peter Adams

LONDON

Writing my London column in the glorious sunshine by a Los Angeles poolside makes England's capitol seem aeons away — grey, bleak and rather depressing. Certainly the latest experiments with chic gay discos weren't doing too well — **Roland's** (63 Conduit Street, London W1; tel: 734-2186; 9:30 p.m.-3 a.m.; closed Sunday) opened with a splash in well-appointed premises. It took only a matter of weeks for things to go wrong — for very soon after opening, the owners were complaining that they were losing around \$1600 a week. By the time this article appears, Roland's may well have become a straight or black niterie.

Adam's (next door to the Odeon cinema in Leicester Square; Tuesday-Saturday until 3 a.m.; Sunday until 2 a.m.) might be more of a success. The club has a disco, a restaurant, a snack bar, and two bars. Open from 8 p.m., Adam's has a pleasant atmosphere and a comfortable ambiance — it holds about three hundred people. Membership is about six dollars per quarter.

Still the most popular disco in town, **Bang** (157 Charing Cross Road, London WC1) is currently undergoing a complete face-lift. Business isn't affected, and d.j. Gary London (who got the idea for Bang from L.A.'s **Studio One**) is hoping that the present policy of Monday night opening only will be extended for a second night (probably Thursday).

One of London's oldest non-licensed clubs, **Le Gigolo** (Kings Road, Chelsea), was recently raided and (temporarily?) closed. Reason being that the Gigolo was the nearest club London had to one with a "backroom." Also gone from King's Road is the popular (but dangerous) cruising area known as the

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Rose-Garden. Police activity there had been intensive over recent months; now these small gardens have been uprooted.

Recent openings in London include the less-than-successful musical based on the life of James Dean. *Dean* (London Casino, Old Compton Street, London W1) goes no way at all to capturing the essence of that charismatic movie star. Other legends recreated for the stage in this overweight show (fraught from inception with problems) include Elizabeth Taylor and the late Sal Mineo. The originals — as with all originals — are unrepeatable.

Two shows opened out-of-town which attracted a lot of attention: Emllyn Williams as *Saki* (seen pre-London, but now in the West End at the Apollo, Shaftesbury Avenue) and *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* (at Manchester's Royal Exchange — but surely destined for London presentation).

Saki is Williams' latest one man show (following in the footsteps of his career triumphs with Dickens and Dylan Thomas). This time around he recreates the life — what little is known of it — and stories of the Edwardian short story-writer Saki, H H Munro. Wit abounds, but Saki had a deeper and darker side, also evident here, which influenced generations of later writers. Amongst those influenced by Saki was Evelyn Waugh, whose *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* has been brilliantly staged. Michael Horden plays Pinfold (an autobiographical character — for, like Pinfold, Waugh suffered a shipboard nervous breakdown) and gives a crowning performance to an already distinguished career.

— Peter Burton

SYDNEY

Admittedly, Sydney has no less than 25 clubs, bars and night clubs catering to a specific gay clientele, but the one which by all criteria which tops the list is Patches in Oxford Street, known locally as "the gay mile." Oxford Street extends from Hyde Park in the city to Paddington, a once working-class area which has, these past few years, been refurbished, and it is along this stretch that most gay establishments are located — bars, baths, beats.

But back to Patches.

Comparisons are odious, but it is difficult not to compare Patches to Hollywood's famous Studio One.

As soon as you enter Patches you know that this is not only a gay

night spot, but that the management has spared no expense in making it a chic and tasteful place. The larger-than-life photographs of nude males set the mood for your visit.

Patchs comprises three major areas: cruising bar, disco and snack bar (where you'll find the dish of the day). Don't be surprised who you meet while there for, being the "in place" in Sydney, lots of local and visiting entertainers frequent it as well as the casts of such shows as *Chorus Line*, *Cycle Sluts*, *Let My People Come* and all from the Lindsay Kemp Dance Company.

As for the music, well, it's strictly disco, and the management gets its hands on much overseas recorded music long before the radio stations do — and that fact, too, attracts many people.

The prices are comparable with those of similar places in this city, but with the added attraction of being cheerful and friendly as well as opening every day of the week. Monday to Saturday the hours are 7 p.m. to 3 a.m., while on Sunday it's 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Aussies are heavy drinkers, so if you go to any bar — gay or non-gay — over here, remember that fact.

Not only has the management at Patchs selected the staff for their individual talents in the "easy to look at" department but also because they are friendly and good at their respective jobs. If you want to know what's going on in the gay scene in Australia you feel free to ask any of the staff at Patchs.

Dress? Well it's strictly casual and the age group of the people who frequent the place regularly is between 18 and 30 years. (In New South Wales — and most States in Australia — the minimum drinking age is 18 years.)

Incidentally, the junior version of Patchs — called Patchs-on-the-Beach — for younger clientele, is based at Coogee, one of Sydney's many popular beaches. The surfing fraternity are to be found there both summer and winter. Opening hours are the same as for Patchs in town, but it is a much more casual place.

Finally, as one who doesn't normally frequent the commercial gay scenes anywhere, I can say that Patchs is the kind of place I would go to if I was looking for a night out in a gay environment.

Well, that takes care of your evenings, but if you want to drink and/or fraternize with other gays during the daytime, there are many Sydney hotels (equivalent in America to bars) with a gay clientele. Most of them, in the summer months, open at 10 a.m. and calling

it a night at 10 p.m., but there are several that operate until 6 a.m. The favorite gay hotels are the front bar of the **Rex Hotel**, in Kings Cross, and the **Cricketer's Arms** in nearby Surry Hills.

I should also mention that there are a few daytime venues, apart from the Rex and Hilton Hotels, which are known for the younger commercial types, but these you can find out from local gays you meet here.

During the summer months the beaches are popular cruising areas, with Lady Jane Beach and Reef Beach being officially designated nude beaches. Most city beaches have "beats" that operate in the summer evenings.

Let me assure you, Americans are made more than welcome in Australia, particularly in Sydney, and we have a substantial American colony here made up of people who have come for a holiday or with a show, and have stayed.

Finally, on your arrival, buy a copy of *Campaign*, obtainable at most newsagents, to find out what's going on in the gay scene for, as Australia's national gay newspaper, you'll find no better or more up-to-date source of gay information.

— Martin Smith

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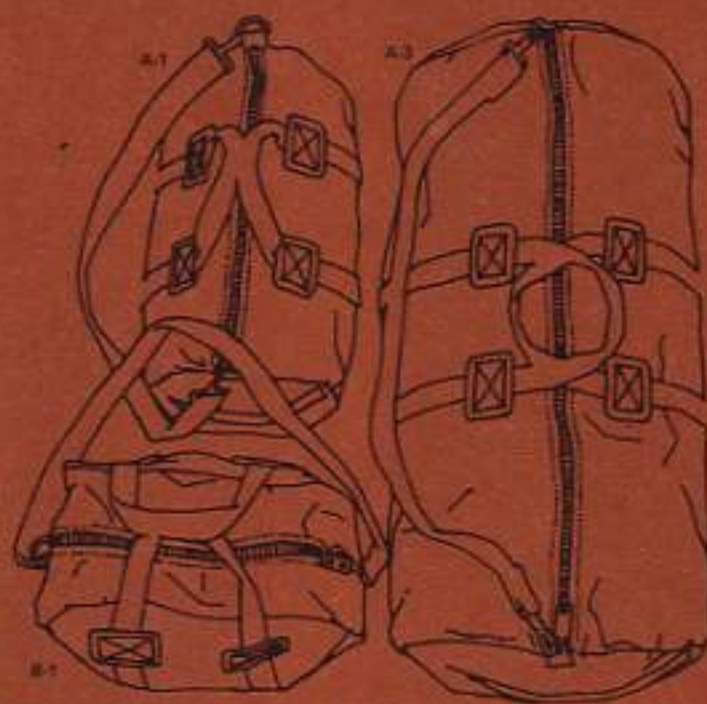
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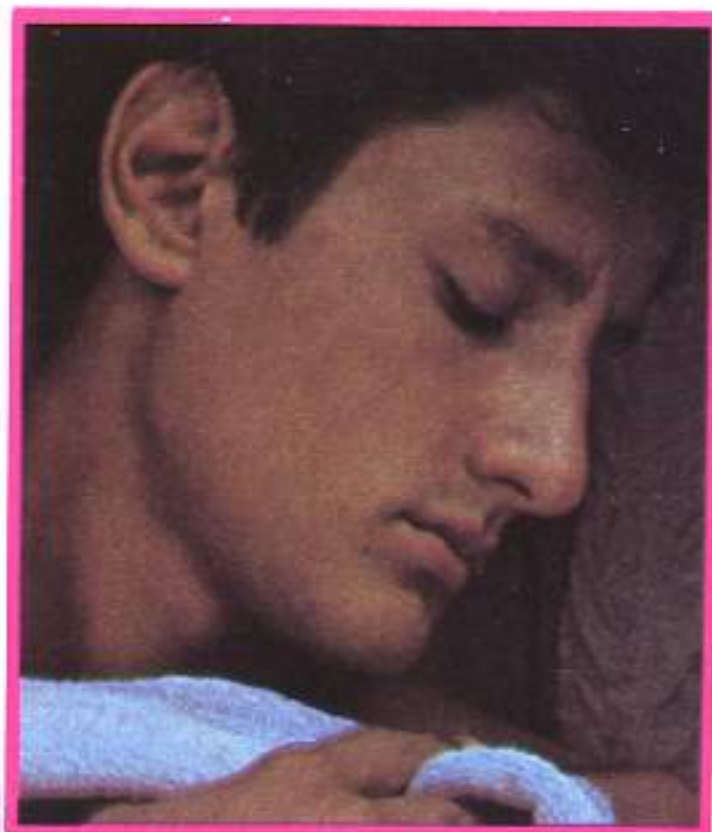
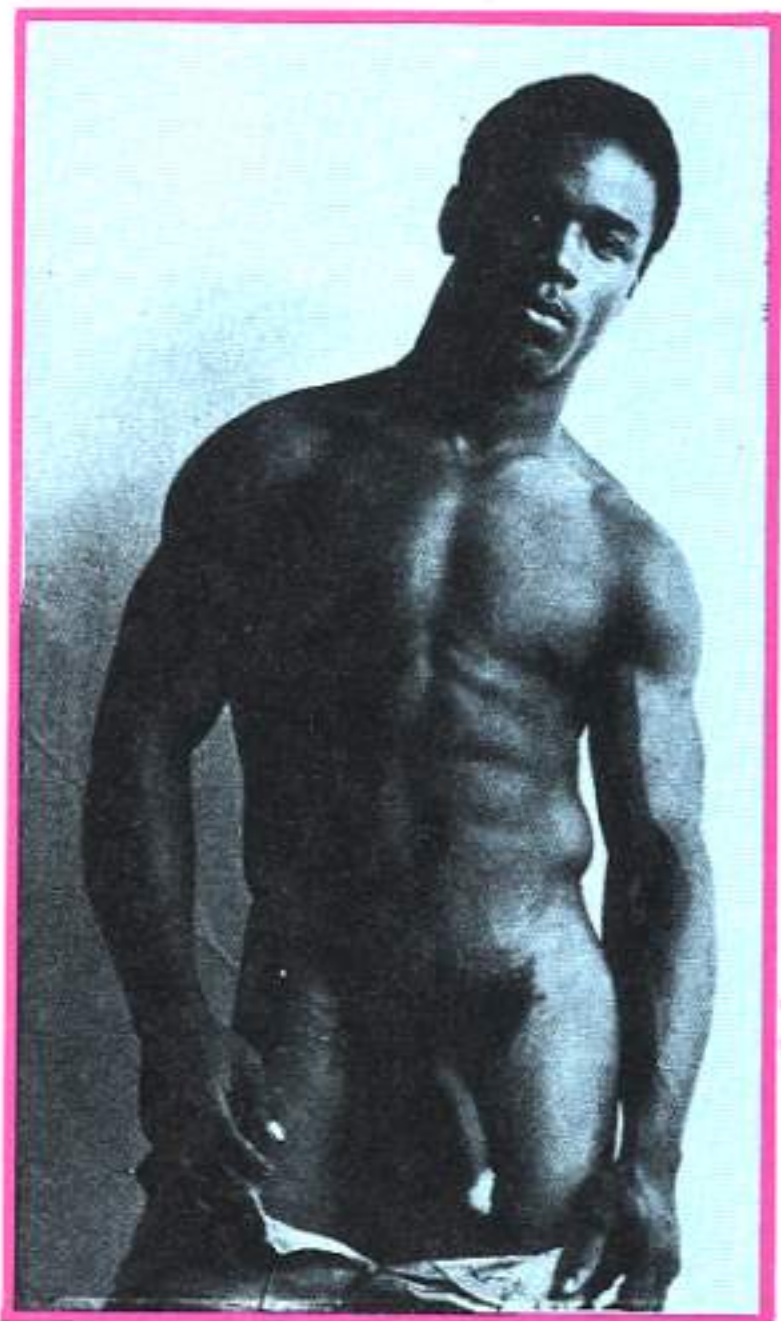
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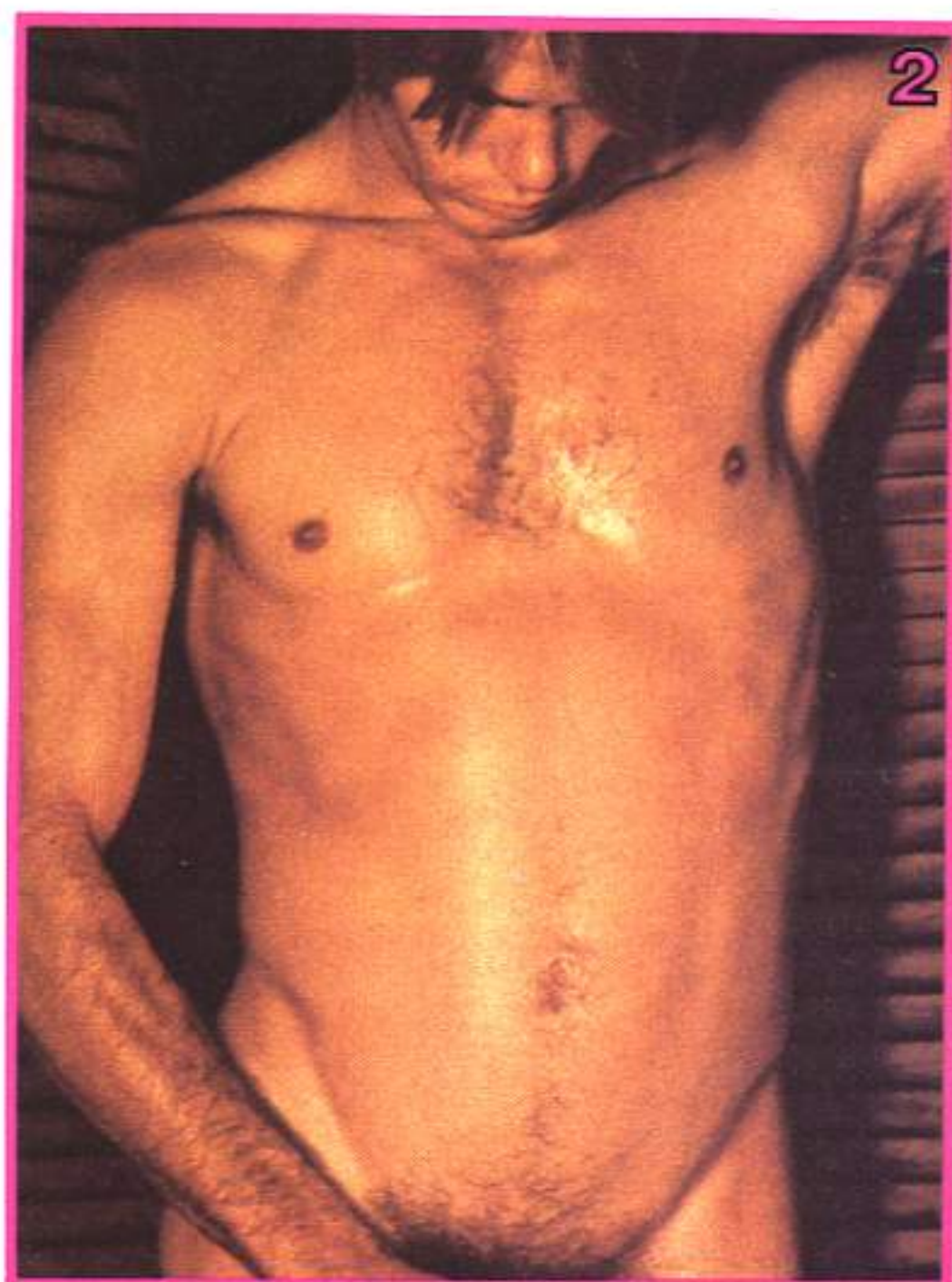
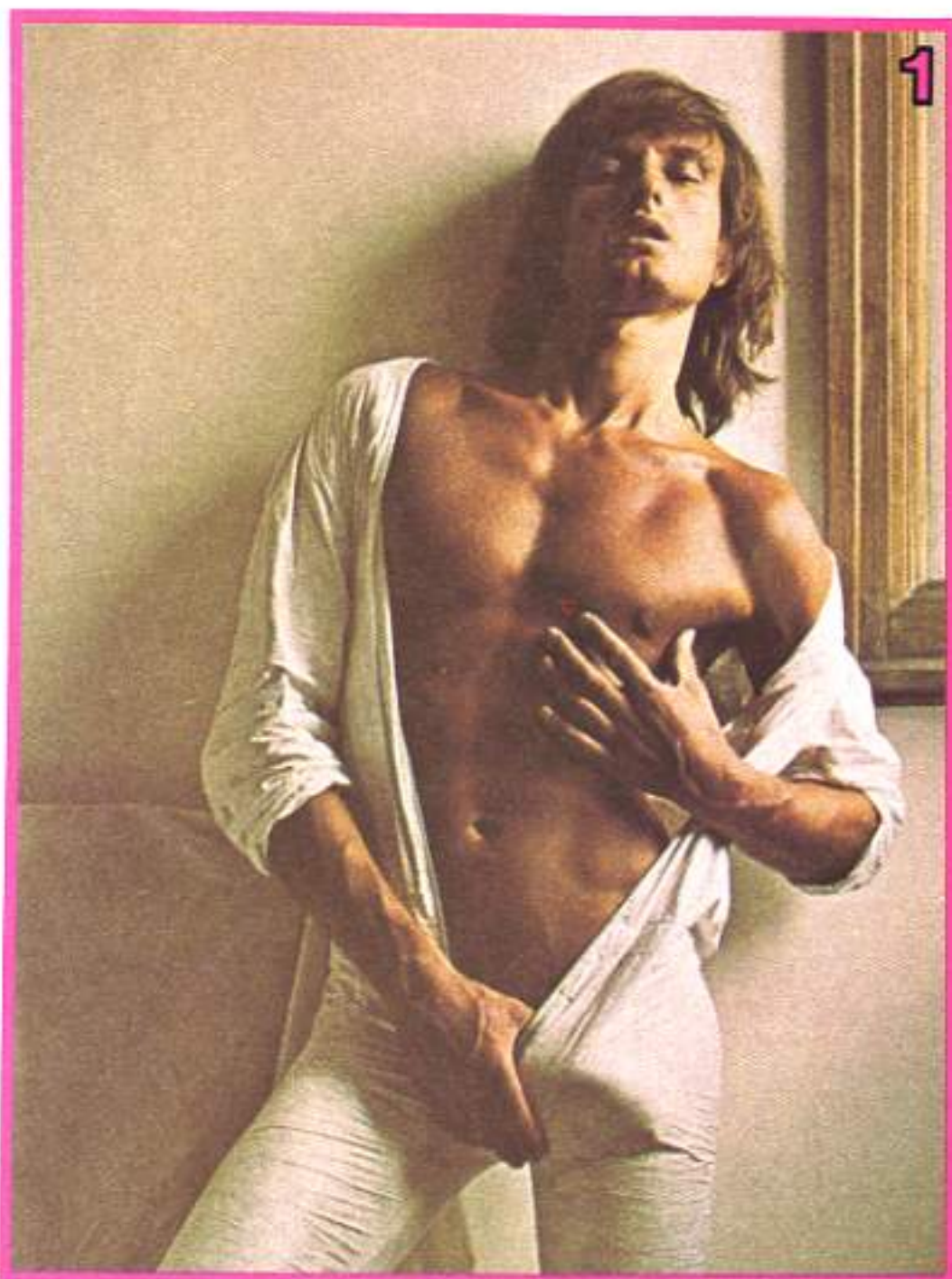
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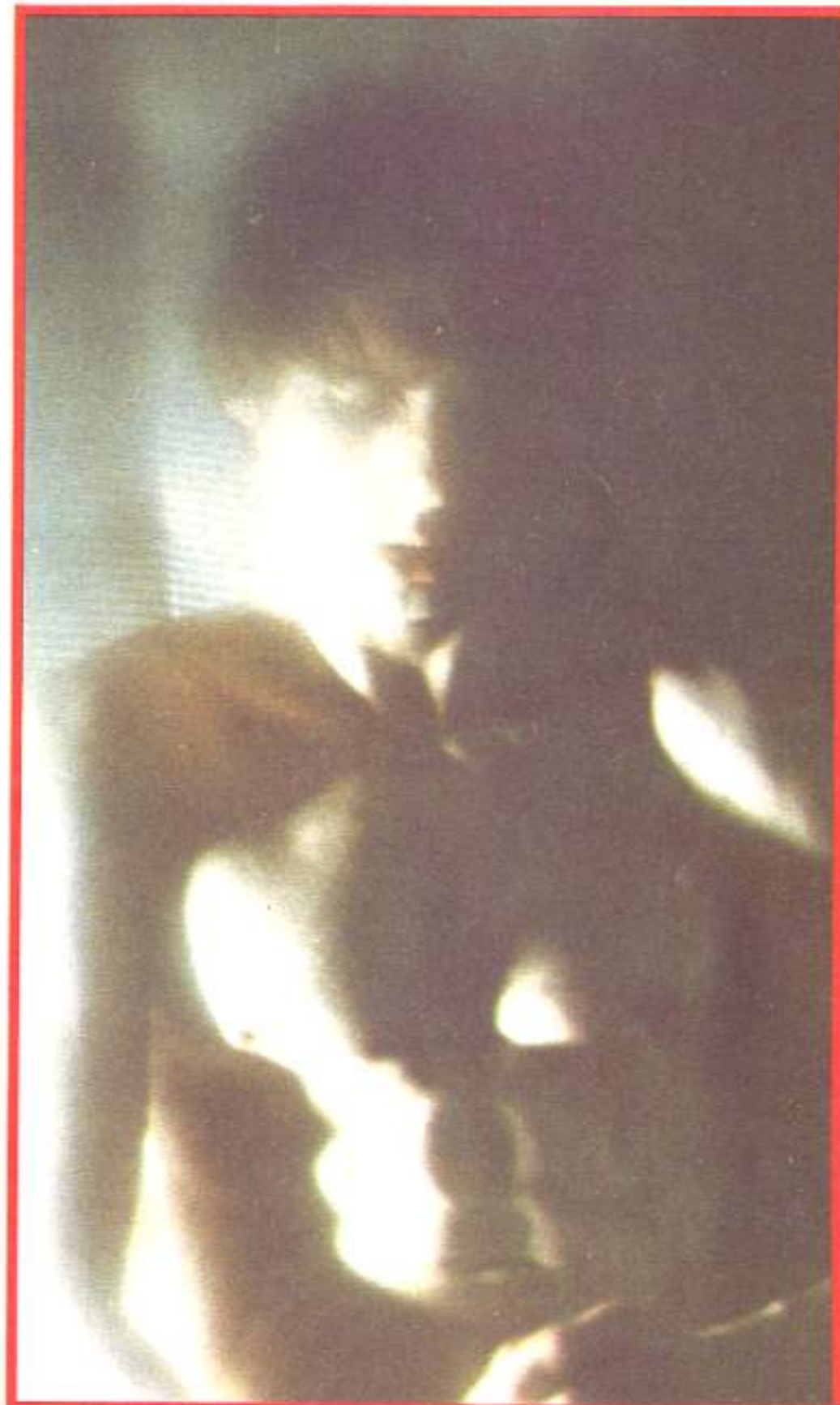
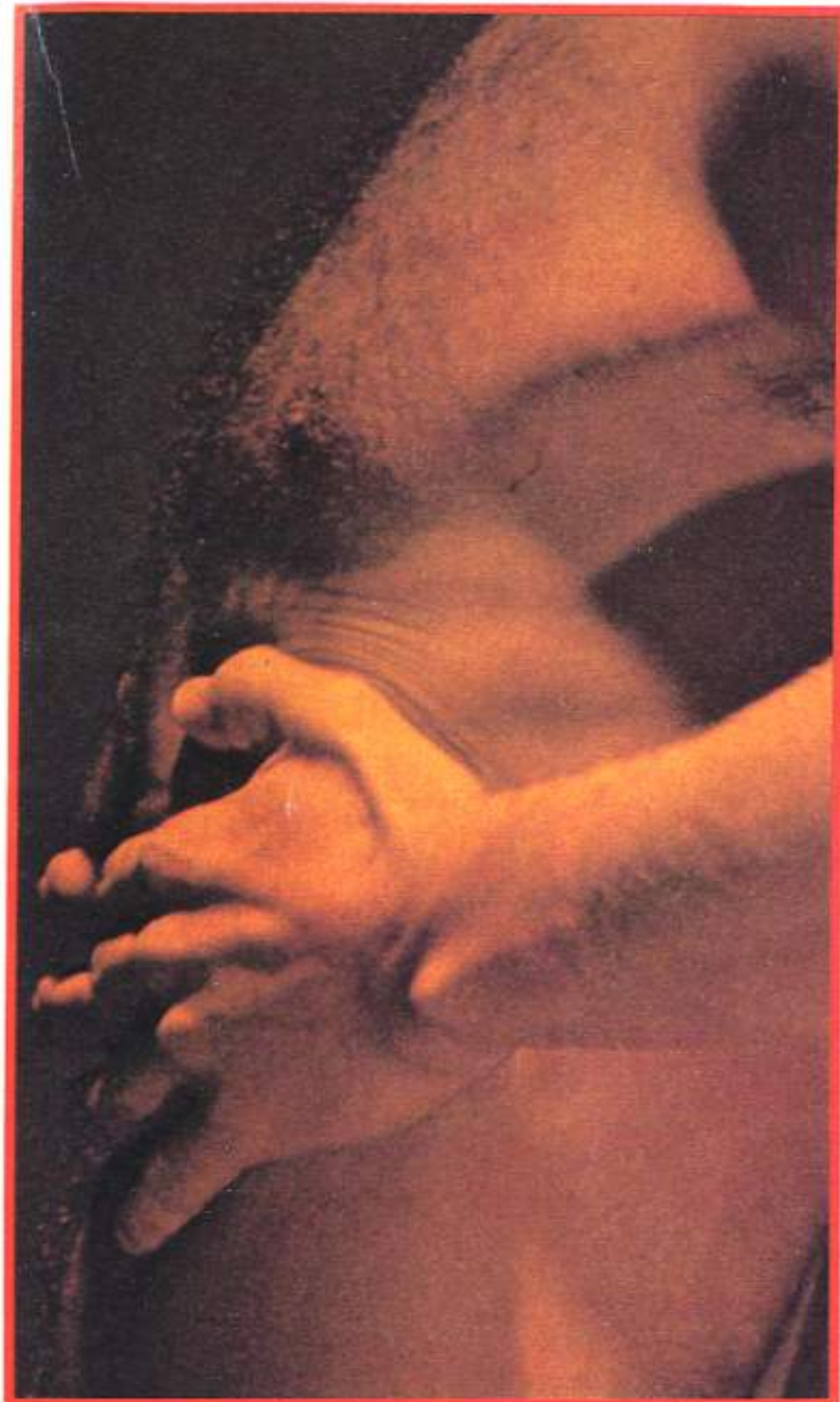


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DRUGS

(continued from page 33)

Like alcohol, the barbs strike first in the parts of the brain which control judgment. Your inhibitions are reduced, and you enter into situations that, due to either puritanical self-restraint or sound judgment, you would ordinarily avoid. Thus gays on barbs often find themselves in tight spots, especially when S&M is concerned. Doctors in big city emergency rooms often tell of cases where men have had their colons perforated during fist-fucking or other rough sex. In most of these cases, they say, the victims were on barbiturates or other downs.

The physical effects of barbs are equally devastating. In moderate doses, they take away your muscular control, so you end up tumbling around the bed without making much contact or knowing much about what is going on. While they may reduce inhibitions, reduce muscular tensions, and control premature ejaculation, they reduce everything else as well. And the performance that results is not going to win you any applause. There's nothing worse you can do to a sex partner than to fall asleep in the middle of the first act.

Barbs are among the more dangerous of drugs, because the margin between an intoxicating dose and a lethal dose is small. And they're all more dangerous when mixed with alcohol or other drugs; one drug acts upon another so that the overdose level is lowered.

COCAINE: Cocaine is "the gentleman's drug." It stimulates the higher parts of the brain without leading to the devastating effects of speed. It makes you feel more aware, more able to keep things under control. It doesn't last as long as speed, meaning you can turn on and off at will. It costs more than speed. And because the street drug is often full of impurities, it pays to shop for quality.

Coke does everything speed does, increases energy, concentration, endurance — only the overall effect is a bit less intense. It lets you enjoy yourself without losing your sense of judgment. Although tolerance does build up, it does so more slowly than speed. It's not habit forming, although a person may get to like the stuff so much it's hard to stop.

Coke has its disadvantages, of course, in addition to its use being illegal. Too much of the stuff can lead to irritability, mild depression,

and an inability to get yourself up; such anxiety and impotence can then only be relieved by the use of more coke.

Cocaine is probably the closest drug there is to a true aphrodisiac. All the physical requirements are there — it constricts the blood vessels, raising the blood pressure slightly and making the skin more responsive. It produces a sense of emotional and physical well-being. It makes dull situations interesting. It's also a local anesthetic; apply it to a sensitive area and it will feel numb and tingly. But this may be dangerous, as areas such as the penis and anus are especially susceptible to irritations caused by the impurities in coke. Individual reactions differ. Many people feel that coke turns them off, while others say that it doesn't do much of anything at all. It is personality, I suppose, that determines how an individual will react to cocaine.

LSD: LSD is the most potent drug known. A colorless liquid, this "miraculous" substance is so powerful that a dot the size of a period is enough to reduce a 200-pound man to a mound of cosmic jelly. It affects a brain chemical, serotonin, which acts as a sort of switchboard in the brain, channeling each bit of sensory input to the right place in the head. When LSD takes over, the wires get crossed and the neural blips get misdirected all over the place. The result is that your senses register a little differently, your thoughts have more grandeur in them — the world is either ending or being reborn — and little things like flowers or cracks in the sidewalk suddenly burst with metaphysical significance. Your fantasies have an easier time getting out and reality finds it harder to get in. You may observe a lot more UFO's than other people, but be careful crossing streets.

Because the physical effects of acid are minor — dilated pupils, higher blood pressure, etc. — the drug's main effect on sex is psychosocial, emotional. Acid is a very unpredictable drug. Its biggest risk is a severe attack of bone-marrow anxiety known as a bad trip; all the demons in your head come out at this time, sometimes as concepts, sometimes as hallucination. They contrive to make things miserable. And so it goes for sex. While acid may help you discover meaning in your environment (and partner) and loose all those fantasies your parents told you not to think about, it may also dredge up a lot of fears and anxieties that you thought you'd for-

gotten or would never have. Two partners on acid may feel that they are literally melting into each other. Or each may feel that the other is plotting his demise.

Safe travel on this rare source of energy depends on three factors; dosage level, mental or emotional set and the immediate surroundings, or setting. If you take a dose you know you can handle, if you're not too anxious or depressed about yourself or your partner, and if you find yourself a comfortable environment with little to depress or disturb you, the possibility of bombing out is small. And acid may have a good long-term effect, especially when someone is weathering an emotional crisis or preparing to face a moment of truth. Many gays are able to come out only after a crisis period of identity tripping. Many others, like Allen Ginsberg, are only able to get in touch with their bisexual potential after taking acid.

But many people, with just cause, believe that LSD is simply too dangerous a toy to play with.

MARIJUANA: Next to nicotine and plutonium, marijuana and its active ingredient THC must be the most over-researched chemical substance around. It seems that every week, government scientists come out with another report saying that grass will make you apathetic, grass will blow your concentration, grass will up your female hormone level until you wake up and find yourself endowed like Mae West. The truth of the matter is, the effect you're likely to get from the social use of grass can only come from much lower doses and much more familiar settings than the labs. Researchers, as a result, tend to overlook the more subtle effects, and the role that subjective factors — environment, people, state of mind — play. For grass is one of those drugs where the effects depend more on the individual and the setting than on the chemicals themselves. Grass is likely to exaggerate your emotions. A good mood becomes elation. A mild anxiety becomes a spell of the jitters.

Sexually speaking, a turn-on becomes even more of a turn-on when both of you are stoned, whereas if you're turned off by a prospective partner, that's all the more reason not to turn on with him. This effect makes grass a great drug for establishing a mood, but a bad drug for eliminating any misgivings or inhibitions you might have. The drug exaggerates ambivalences and indecisions; on fairly large doses, deciding

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what flavor of ice cream to buy or what to do in bed can take hours. But the doses most people get are so small that it's fairly safe to say that the ritual of smoking a joint has more effect in bringing two people together than the psychoactive chemical itself.

Marijuana does have physiological effects, though they are so complex that researchers still don't know why those jagged little molecules do funny things to your head. We know that it has some mind-expanding effects, like LSD, and we know that it also acts as a sedative of sorts. It stimulates the hunger mechanism, commonly known as the munchies. And it has long-term effects on the hormonal system, effects that many say are detrimental to sex. Too much weed over too long a time, they say, cuts the production of the male hormone testosterone. The sex drive goes down and temporary impotence or even sterility results. But that's only on heavy doses. Lay off the weed for a week, they say, and things will spring back to normal.

POPPERS: (Amyl, Butyl, Nitrite): The popper mystique is probably one of the more inexplicable aspects of gay culture. Originally available only by prescription, these drugs are

now sold on the open gay market under the guise of liquid incense, deodorant, etc. Amyls are one of the more unusual drugs, in that they act on the circulatory system and only indirectly on the nerves and the brain. And of all the drugs, they are unique in that they directly affect sexual performance. And in some doctors' opinion, amyls are probably the least harmful of the recreational drugs.

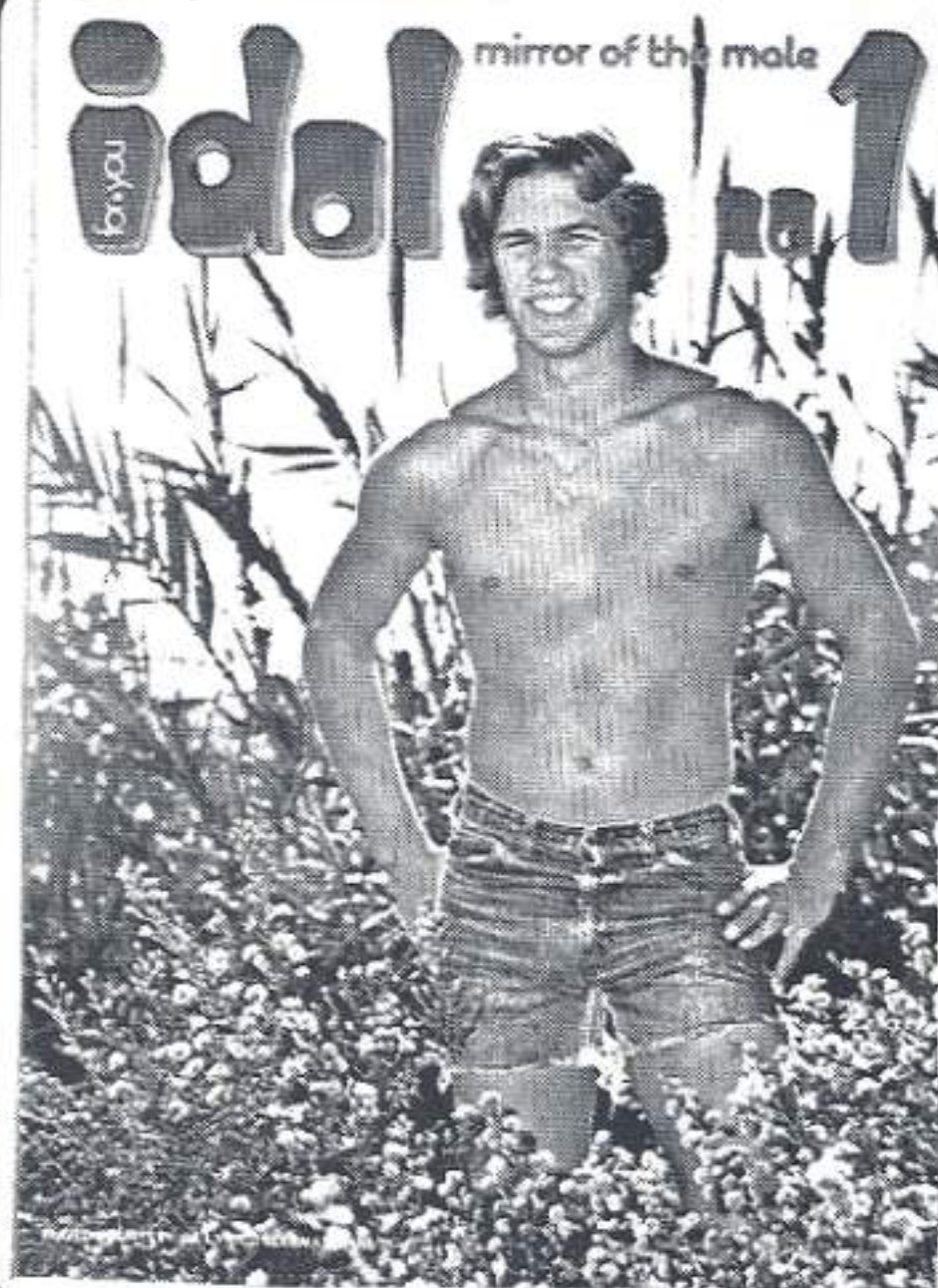
Amyls are medically prescribed to relieve angina pectoris, a common heart ailment, by dilating the blood vessels and forcing the heart to give an added boost of energy to make up for the decline in blood pressure. The vasodilation has two effects which influence sexual performance. First, they momentarily decrease oxygen flow to the brain, creating a euphoric, giddy sensation that lasts about a minute. You sort of melt into your surroundings; if you're having sex, you become fused with your partner and you feel your skin melting into his. Secondly, the dilation and increased blood flow may also produce a fuller erection and the relaxation may loosen up the anal sphincters and make it easier to be fucked. As with all drugs, these effects differ from person to person. For some, the giddiness may

produce headache and nervous anxiety, while for others, the increased blood flow may affect the skin surfaces, making sex unpleasant.

The moderate use of poppers is not likely to cause harm. The oxygen loss to the brain is temporary and is alleviated in about a minute. Some doctors feel that amyls could rupture blood vessels in the brain, causing stroke, but there are no confirmed cases of this. Others caution against use by those suffering from glaucoma, ulcers, low blood pressure or a history of stroke. But as the drug is used on delicate heart patients, its dangers appear to be minimal. One noted psychopharmacologist claims that the worst harm poppers can cause is a fixation, brought on by excessive use, where one cannot have sex without poppers or do without them at all.

As for other drugs, such as mescaline, PCP, THC or Qualudes, the less said the better. Real mescaline has about the same effects on sex as LSD, with a few additional side-effects, but most street "mescaline" isn't that at all. It's mostly low-grade acid with a little speed or depressant thrown in as a buffer. PCP, a crude animal tranquilizer, was banned for human consumption because of the way it ravages the higher functions

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of the brain. The side-effects can be devastating, and include anxiety attacks, gargoyle hallucinations and amnesia, both short and long-term. Sex on PCP ranges from the pointless to the physically impossible.

The same goes for THC, which in street form is usually PCP or bad acid. (Real THC still costs \$10 a dose to synthesize, too much for street use, but your friends at the chemical companies are working hard.) As for Quaaludes, some people enjoy them because they leave the upper parts of your brain intact while destroying your coordination so you can very calculatedly watch yourself stumbling around and making an ass of yourself. Some say that sex on Quaaludes can be an incredible trip, sloshing around in bed and watching your extremities turn to rubber. Trouble is, after a few uses the drug begins to do the same thing to your brain.

Drugs can do a lot of harm, to be sure — and I've tried to point out some of the dangers. But even more dangerous is the ignorance and misinformation — some of it passed off as scientific information — that continue to float around. The reports of tabloid scientists — that speed is nonaddictive, that marijuana will make men grow breasts

— can do as much harm as any law enforcement agency, considering the number of people who believe such reports.

Both the misinformation and the laws stem from the same complex of puritanical attitudes toward drugs and toward non-procreative sex.



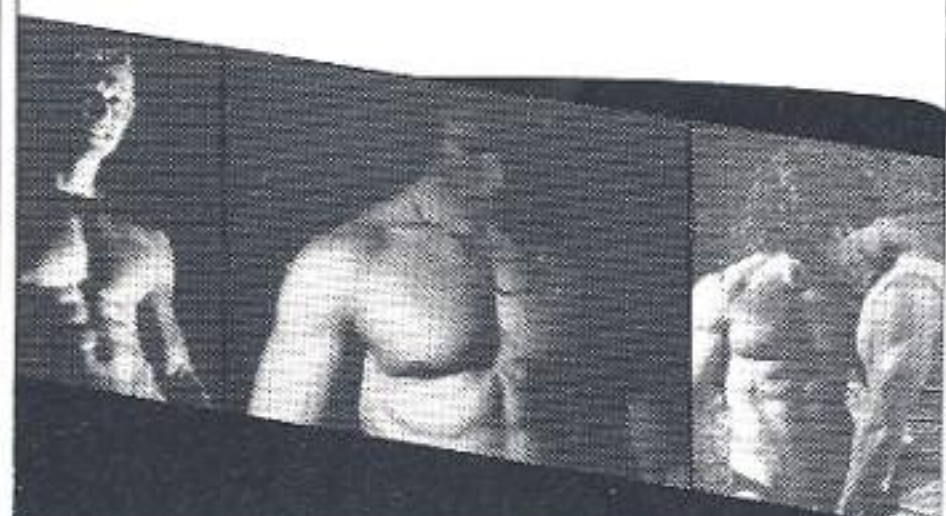
These attitudes can take several forms. One is to say that all non-medical drugs are detrimental to the health and sex life, so don't take them. Another is to say that the use of all drugs stems from deep-seated feelings of inadequacy and lack of fulfillment — which is to say that if

you use drugs there must be something wrong with your sex life — impotence, premature ejaculation, etc., something that can only be solved by finding Jesus, turning straight or signing up with a good sex therapist. And it is, of course, true that many gays use drugs for all the wrong reasons.

But not all reasons for taking drugs are negative, just as not all drugs are harmful or addictive in occasional, moderate doses. For gays on an even emotional keel, there are many positive effects that can be had from the infrequent use of drugs, effects which are overlooked by therapists and researchers who have never used the stuff themselves. One physician, the director of the psychopharmacology research unit of a major New England medical school, puts it this way: "Drugs are fun to take. They produce euphoria, they alter perceptions in an interesting way, and they give an ordinary environment a sense of the extraordinary. Many users think of drugs as a part of life's pleasures, and not all of them are wrong. It is only when drugs are used irrationally, or to excess, or as an escape, that the tradeoff occurs and bad consequences result."

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PEOPLE (continued from page 73)

met at one of Corin's parties in London had told me if I ever hoped to do anything in films I'd have to come to Hollywood, so I informed my family that the next step was 'I'm leaving again. I'm off to Hollywood!' "

When he arrived, he moved into that director's posh Bel Air mansion, but upon being told "I made it the hard way and so will you have to," Gene "packed my little suitcase and walked down to Sunset Boulevard from Bel Air and caught the bus to, of all places, where everybody goes, Hollywood and Vine." There followed an assortment of jobs, unloading

produce at a restaurant at 5 in the morning, being a desk clerk at a motel all night, waiting on tables — but finally landing the lead role in a touring company of *The Dirtiest Show in Town*.

In that notorious show, one asks hesitantly, did Gene strip? "The lead never had to take his clothes off," he answers, "never had to be nude. But, I did. The reason is because up to that point I had had a thing in my head about being nude. Being from the Southern Baptist background, you just don't drop your pants at a handshake. But because everyone else in the cast was being nude every night, and I was with them, I learned

something from them: nudity is nothing to be ashamed of.

"It just blows my mind that they're trying to ban nude beaches, which is mind-boggling. I don't understand this thing about being ashamed of the human body, or even of being ashamed of the human functions that have been here before any of us were, and will be here after we've all gone. Prostitution, homosexuality, everything has been here before us and will be here after we're dead and gone. They're just as human as taking a piss or sitting on the john. It's all part of being human, and you can't change it no matter how much you preach or jump up and down or throw oranges or anything.

"I've become very political-minded now because of Anita Bryant and all that shit. It's just ignorance. To me there is no such thing as being heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual. One is just sexual. It doesn't make a bit of difference to me — and shouldn't to anyone else — whether you go to bed with your parakeet or the boy next door!"

Lately, Gene has been landing small parts in independent films and on television. You've seen that glistening embarrassment of teeth on Close-Up commercials, and his well-manicured hands as "inserts" for Lee Majors on *The Six Million Dollar Man* ("I never dreamed that one day my hands would be paying my rent for me!"). And now he has his newly-formed Preston-Poe Productions, "a diversified company designed for both the development of new television and movie properties and the marketing of unique consumer products."

The company has exclusive marketing rights to Whatever Rings Jewelry, which makes "quality gold jewelry for body piercing." WHAT? Gene flashes those familiar teeth, answers "chest piercing — or anywhere else you want to stick them" and, with a flourish, rips open his plaid shirt. There, bracketing a teasable nest of silky chest hair, delicate gold rings pierce each erect tit. "This kind of thing," he says.

Primarily geared to the gay market, the use of these rings prompts the nascent entrepreneur to confess: "I've learned over the years never to say 'never,' because you never know from one year to the next what you will be doing. And you open yourself up to learning a lot more." Then, he needlessly adds, "I'm quite a talker. My mouth has gotten me a long ways." The implications of that remark breaks him up, and he nearly falls off the sofa.

And, at that point, the interview officially ends.

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NIGHTLIFE

(continued from page 14)

Broadway to Miami under the leadership of Zev Bufman. Miami-ians are fortunate in having a producer who brings the latest Broadway shows to them, and can look forward to *The Wiz*, *Sly Fox*, and Carol Channing in *Dolly*.

— John Saunders

ATLANTA

Atlanta used to be Carter Country, now it's Cabaret Country. David Sheppard and Gene Walker have moved their **Manhattan Yellow Pages** to larger quarters in the downtown Omni International complex. The show, *The Crazy Horse Saloon Revue*, which David Bell directed and choreographed, is heavily dance-oriented, using music and ideas from Broadway, Hollywood, Paris and Vegas.

Patrick Cuccaro and Michael Chafin are keeping things smaller and simpler in their new **Showcase Cabaret** (in Ansley Mall, Piedmont and Monroe Dr.). As the name implies, the entertainment is tailored to showcase the skills of the performers involved.

Yet another cabaret is scheduled to open Christmas Week, adjacent to **Gene and Gabe's** restaurant (1578 Piedmont). It's planned to be smaller and more intimate than the others, featuring new material by Rod Warren.

Our old reliable cabaret troupe, the *Wits End Players*, weren't quite up to par with their last revue, *Malice in Wonderland*, or a *Child's Garden of Perverses*. They'll be opening another new show in January, after the traditional holiday revue. The Wits Enders perform in the Sheraton-Biltmore hotel (805 W. Peachtree).

Meanwhile, the battle goes on to be the "in" place. The **Magic Garden** opened (1888 Cheshire Bridge Rd.), luring the crowd away from **Encore** (845 Peachtree). So Encore closed its disco for a few weeks and remodeled it, adding mirrors, plants and new lights and revamping the sound system, then reopened.

The dust hadn't settled yet by deadline day, so check them both out when you're in town. They're equipped to be among the best boogie spots in the Southwest.

The *Atlanta Constitution* had to eat its words when their reporter thought she heard me arguing with

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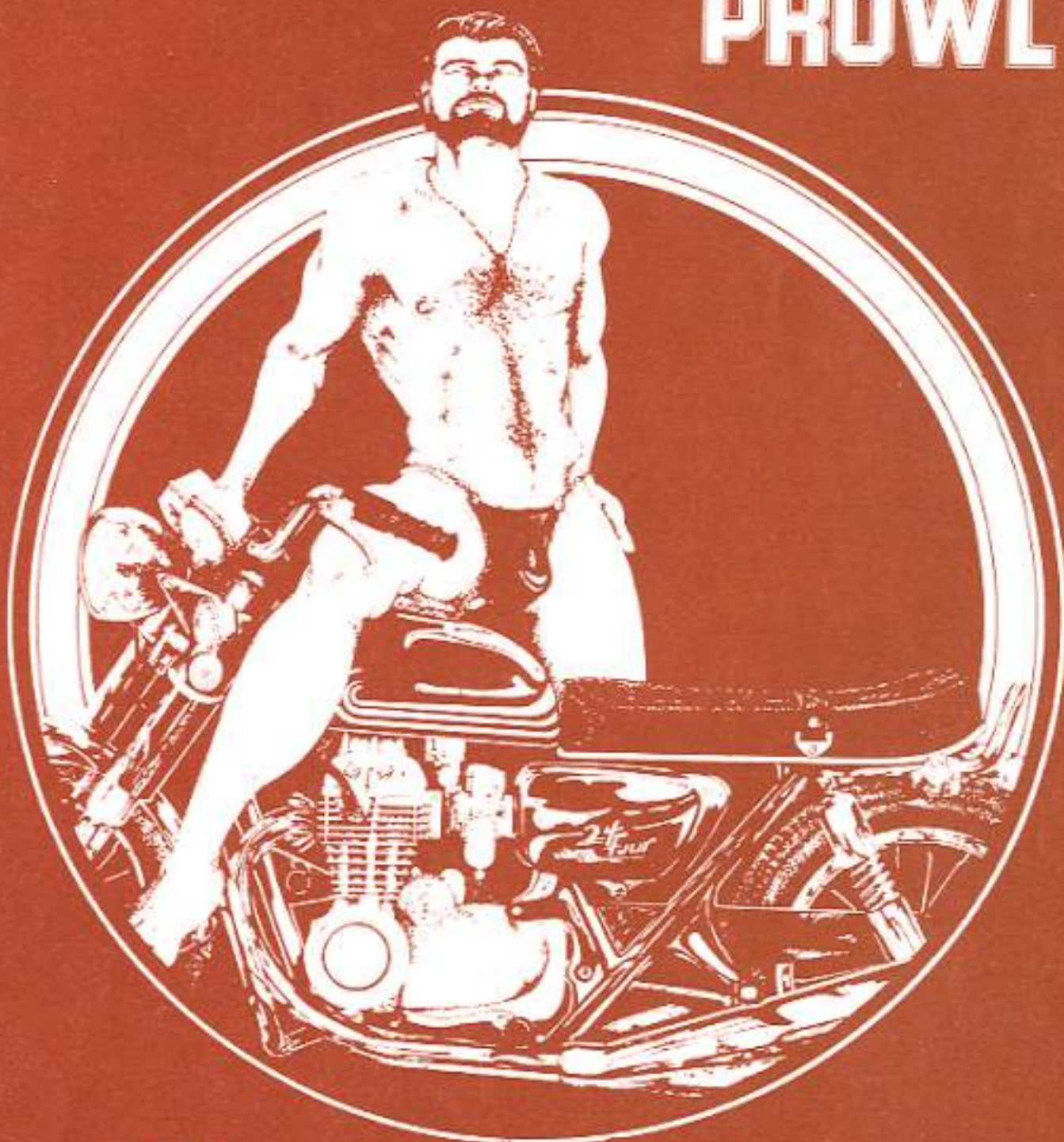
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TOTAL

(continued from page 87)

Cloris Leachman about gay rights, and printed that. The only retraction Cloris demanded of a generally inaccurate and bitchy article was the part that misinterpreted her stand on the gay issue. She's on our side, and wanted Atlanta to know it!

The Alvin Ailey company topped off an unprecedented month-long residency in Atlanta with five days of sellout performances, including what may be "guest artist's" Judith Jamison's last appearance with the troupe.

Tennessee Williams will spend most of January here, even though he could be warmer in Key West. He'll be supervising rehearsals for the Jan. 19 premiere of his new play, *Tiger Tail*, at Alliance Theatre (1280 Peachtree). Actually, it's a rewrite of the movie, *Baby Doll*, which was a rewrite of the one-act play, *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*. Current at Alliance is Philip Pleasants in *A Christmas Carol*. The Alliance production of *Vanities*, in the 200-seat Studio Theater, finally closed after 20 sold-out weeks, probably the longest run for a straight play in our city's history.

The star-spangled Winter Play Season begins Jan. 10 at the Peachtree Playhouse (1150 Peachtree). E.G. Marshall and Fritz Weaver will co-star in Molnar's *The Play's the Thing*; Jean Stapleton will appear in something; and the season will include a new play, *Masterpiece*, a "docu-drama" about art forgeries, by Gordon Russell and Larry Ward. Nothing was known about the other three plays at presstime, except that one would be a musical.

Academy Theater (now at 1374 W. Peachtree) opened their season with *The Hostage*. After a Christmas break, they'll do *The Lady's Not for Burning* from Jan. 12 - Feb. 3.

Kelly's Seed and Feed Theater (544 N. Angier) will encore their traditional Christmas presentation of *Herod*, adapted from 12th century liturgical music-dramas. It's my favorite event of the season.

Another Holiday favorite is the Atlanta Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker*, accompanied by the Atlanta Symphony, Dec. 26-30 at the Fox Theater (660 Peachtree).

The Symphony has their own Christmas Festival, Dec. 16-18, and performances of Berlioz' *L'Enfance du Christ*, Jan. 20-22, set for Symphony Hall (1280 Peachtree). In both cases, Robert Shaw will conduct the orchestra, chorus and soloists.

Our Atlanta Rhythm Section comes home for a New Year's Eve concert at the Fox, to give us back some of their "Georgia Rhythm."

Don't say I'm not giving you enough notice: the Southeastern Gay Conference will be held here April Fool's weekend — and that's no joke. Headquarters will be the Georgian Terrace hotel (659 Peachtree), with Saturday's events across the street in the Fox. The planning started months ago to make this conclave as meaningful as it is enjoyable. We're even going to get the dogwoods to bloom a week early for the occasion!

— Steve Warren

TORONTO

Bay surroundings here have brightened with the opening of a macho cruising bar called Dudes (10 Broadalbane St.). There's no cover and no minimum, but a maximum of friendly males, 25-35, meeting amid a warm and masculine setting. Dudes serves low alcohol beer and wine and tasty light snacks reasonably priced. Try a Dudes special—The Folsom Prism: beer, Grenadine, brown sugar and lemon on the rocks in a ten-inch phallic glass. If you don't meet Mr. Right in the novelty shop, over the billiard table or amusement machines, or at the nude-pics-under-glass bar, you can always arrange to take the glass home. Dudes is open evenings after 9:30 and features an afternoon tea dance and brunch on Sundays. Try something different for a change; drop into Dudes. It'll be the first of many visits.

With a freshness like mountain air, Vancouver fashion designer Christopher Ryan is knocking the traditionally staid Canadian fashion industry on its behind. Approaching fashion from a psychological viewpoint, Ryan designs with the attitude of the wearer foremost in mind. The basic premise is that your true personality will show itself through what you wear. Each item is designed for freedom of movement and 'feel': a nude concept that looks and feels best when worn au naturel. Ryan favors soft and smoky colors in unusual combinations and sensuous fabrics: silk, jersey, crepe, tricot, etc. They're styled for comfort: light and breezy wrap jackets loosely tied, drawstring pajama pants, slinky tops with bondage ties.

Not only are fashions with the CR label the rage nationally. Ryan's CRUSA line is manufactured in the LA area for our southern neighbors. Ryan creates 'fashions for people

who get up in the morning not knowing in what city they'll be going to bed.' That may be a tall order for a burgeoning market. Perhaps success lies in the fact that this market includes one hot young designer called Christopher Ryan. Inquiries: 310 Water Street, Vancouver, B.C.

A friend came over for the evening recently bringing a record for me to hear. *Raves* don't come freely; but in the case of a lady by name of Jane Olivor, superlatives are not enough. Her powerful emotional interpretations and the sheer beauty of her artistry are unexcelled. Until you've experienced the incredible Olivor spell, you don't know what feeling music means. She has only two albums; the latest, entitled *Chasing Rainbows*, contains ten cuts, not one of which will leave you less than deeply moved. My sincere thanks to Miss Olivor for sharing her ability to make life more beautiful and special thanks to Paulis for introducing us.

— Bryan Crown

DETROIT

Winter is here, it has gotten cold, and the snow is falling. All of which makes for pretty scenery, but the fact remains that this is not the most inviting weather to go out and party in. But the weatherman said that this winter should be better than last year's. I can only remember once last winter, with our record snow and cold, that Detroit came to a standstill. So this should be a relatively active winter. Besides these brisk days and down-right cold nights provide the incentive to find someone to snuggle up and keep warm with. In Detroit, there are many places where one can find this warm person, and many more places where one can take him.

Detroit is a very pretty place during the holidays. The entire city is lit up in Christmas colors, and the town abounds with the cheer of the season. Downtown and Northland Shopping Center in Southfield always have excellent outdoor lighting displays which one should see. Stephen's Saloon and Menjo's are both decorated very nicely.

The Interchange, Stephens. **The Woodward**, Menjo's. **The Gas Station**, **The Cove**, the **Escape**, and **Gagans** all scheduled New Year's bashes.

This past summer I told you about a new bar, The Cove. Let me tell you about it again. This bar is hot! The Cove is open 7 days a week and after hours on Friday and Saturday. Plus, it serves meals (and

I must say very good ones) during the afternoon and evening until 10 p.m., and after hours. If you want to have a good time, The Cove is where you should go.

This past fall a new bar, **My Fair Lady** (Jefferson and Van Dyke) opened on the east side. My Fair Lady is Detroit's best shot to date at a bar like 12 West in New York or Studio One in Los Angeles. An awful lot of money and effort was invested in this bar, all of which is evident. My Fair Lady is a very plush, comfortable bar with an excellent sound system. Larry Bohannon, a firm believer and promoter of progressive disco, is the d.j. on Sunday and Monday nights. If your feet feel the need to move, that would be a very good time to try out Detroit's newest bar.

If, at 2 a.m. on the weekends, you still want to party, there is the **Club Fever** (6 Mile and Woodward). Club Fever, formerly the Afterglow, is Detroit's after hours disco. Serving just soft drinks, Club Fever has a large dance floor, very good sound system and the latest in disco music.

Finishing the season is Valentine's Day. No firm plans have been set for celebrations at the bars, although **Stephen's** will probably throw a party (they do for everything else). But I'm sure whatever goes on you'll celebrate it with the one that helped you to stay warm all winter.

— Jimi Walters

CHICAGO

By now, Chicago's citizens are bundling up for another predicted arctic winter. Outdoor cruising is unthinkable and, subsequently, the action centers around anyplace with a furnace. Unfortunately, an out-of-towner or newcomer to the city will find it more difficult meeting new acquaintances during the next couple months.

The large discos sizzle, but their loud circus atmosphere is not conducive to friendly conversation. For quieter and more intimate encounters, Chicago's northside neighborhood bars are just the ticket. The settings are less elegant, but the crowds are more relaxed/casual, and most have abandoned their "bullshit" exteriors.

Little Jim's (3501 N. Halsted), containing a pleasant mixture of clientele, has Thursday evening movies at 9 p.m. ranging from camp favorites like *Flying Down to*

Rio to The Gay Divorcee.

The Closet (3325 N. Broadway) has some of the city's most friendly and concerned bartenders. The patrons, comprised of a beautifully harmonious mixture of gay men and women, carry forth the warm feelings.

Young go-go boys are one of the main attractions at **Cheeks** (2730 N. Clark). Heavy cruising is evident, especially after 2 a.m. when the crowds flow in for those last two drinking hours.

Carol in Exile (3510 N. Broadway) is a small downstairs establishment which has lost some of its original customers since its move over a year ago from its former Halsted Street location. Be prepared to drink once inside. Most of Carol's customers like their liquor and are capable of drinking any number of persons under the table.

For "the Latin touch," one may venture over a few blocks to **El Dorado** (2683 N. Halsted), a rather grubby corner bar featuring go-go boys.

The Bushes (3320 N. Halsted) remains as Chicago's best neighborhood bar: clean, friendly and superbly designed. Movie nights are Mondays at 8:30 with films in the musical-comedy genre.

All of Chicago's winter activities don't center around the pubs. For theater-goers we have many inventive community productions accentuated by playwright David Mamet's (*Water Buffalo*) world premieres here.

Most of the larger downtown auditoriums too frequently play host to warmed-over New York productions (*Same Time Next Year*) or dismal Broadway hopefuls (Liza Minnelli's *The Act*, nee *Shine It On*). At presstime, Cyril Ritchard is scheduled to continue in the musical *Side by Side by Sondheim* at **Drury Lane** theater in the Water Tower Place, 175 E. Chestnut. *Pippin* at the **Shubert**, 22 W. Monroe, closes this month (Dec.) after disastrous Chicago reviews followed by the long-awaited *A Chorus Line* opening in January.

Since schedules are likely to change, it is advised one check either the neighborhood, city or "Gay Life" newspapers for up-to-date listings.

One last mention: Monday evenings at **Man's Country Baths** (5015 N. Clark) should warm the cockles of one's heart (to say nothing of other areas) when lockers are half-price. The crowds aren't as large as those weekenders, but the towel-clad weekday beauties are more than congenial.

— Bill Lumen

PHILADELPHIA

Everything's booming! Theater, opera, concerts, jazz establishments, new bars and a variety of entertainment events are in the process of making Philadelphia one of the liveliest cities on the East Coast. By now, a long list of plays and other events have come and gone. Such celebrities as James Earl Jones, Jean Marsh, Herschel Bernardi, Eileen Heckart, Jason Robards, and Milo O'Shea have al-

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ready tread the many Philly stages. A number of these talented people have graced the innovative theater at the Annenberg Center (3680 Walnut St.). Among those productions still to come are such great works as Hellman's *Toys In The Attic*; Feiffer's *Hold Me*; the searing *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*; and Strindberg's *The Creditors*, with Geraldine Page and Rip Torn.

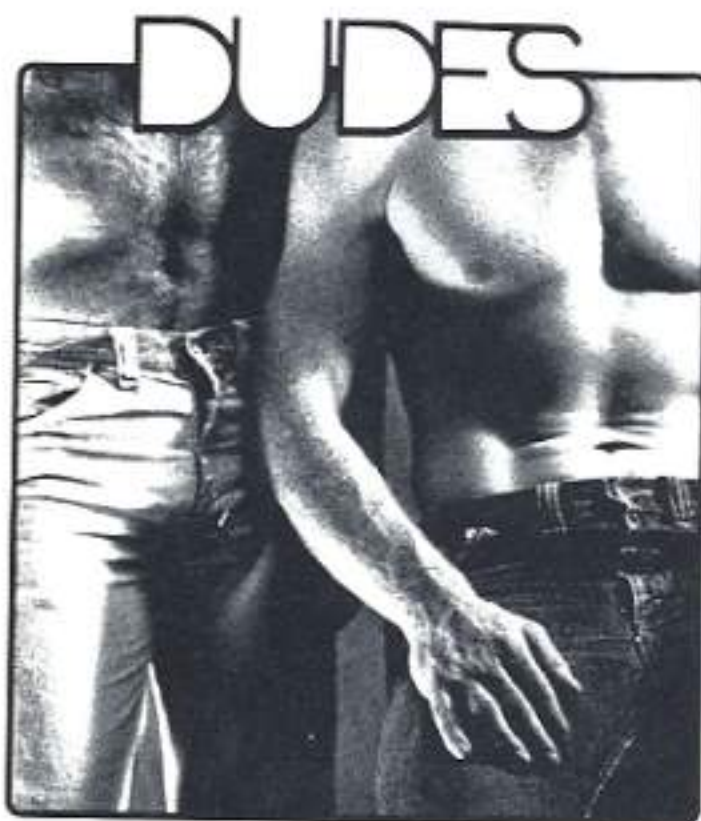
The opera season here is a fine one. The Opera Company Of Phila., now in its third season, is bringing *The Flying Dutchman*, *Norma*, *Attila*, and *Lucia Di Lammermoor* to the opera faithful of this city. Far from being dead, opera enjoys great popularity in this formerly Quaker city. One of the more enjoyable events of this adventurous season was the return of Menotti's *The Hero*.

If your musical taste runs to jazz, then Philadelphia is your place. Several nightspots have expanded their once modest jazz offerings. *Grendel's Lair* (5th and South), the *Main Point* (in Bryn Mawr), and the *Bijou Cafe* (Lombard near Broad), have all decided to enlarge their jazz schedules, liven up their houses, and widen their audiences.

A brand new, all jazz nightspot is the already popular *Hot Club* (21st and South).

Gay bars have also multiplied in Philly. Remember the Midway? No? Remember the Pepper Box? Maybe? — Well, forget them! Out of their ashes at 254 S. 12th St., has risen the fabulous *Equus*. Featuring three bars and an Italian restaurant, *Equus* is one of the most elegant additions to the Philadelphia gay bar/restaurant scene. The front bar is quietly elegant with lovely prints on the walls and bamboo fans for chandeliers. The restaurant, in the back, is quite a place. "Class" is the only way to describe the ambience. The food is good and the prices are reasonable. But, dinner is not all they serve. A "Sunday Brunch Extraordinaire" is offered with unusual dishes such as scallops, peppers and onions in wine sauce. So, don't settle for burnt toast and a glass of grapefruit juice when you can have brunch at *Equus*.

Gay bars with restaurants seem to be the thing here. Several new places have opened or reopened. *The Nugget Saloon* is one in the latter category. Atop the 247 Bar (247 S. 17th Street), the Nugget



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Saloon (formerly the Grubsteak), has a much-improved menu and quite a variety of opportunities to try the fare. Sunday brunches, mid-week buffets, and luncheons are all part of the program at the Nugget. Another restaurant/bar is the Leff Bank down in Queen Village. This quiet, friendly place run by Miki and Niki has recently re-emerged as a good place to spend an evening. The reason is simple: they have opened a restaurant and are serving good food along with the good music already there.

One of Philadelphia's brightest gay businesses, Giovanni's Room (1426 Spruce Street) celebrated its first anniversary in October. Giovanni's Room is probably the finest gay bookstore in the country. The owners, Arleen Olshan and Ed Hermance, are continually trying to build a better stock and make the store a real community-involved business. The atmosphere is warm and friendly and there is always an opportunity to sit and chat with personnel about anything under the sun. It is also a storehouse of gay information for Greater Phila. Stop in and see for yourself.

— Joseph DeMarco

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McQUEEN

(continued from page 56)

mail and box into the Pacific Ocean. His only "Hollywood touch" is a multi-thousand-dollar gold Piaget wristwatch.

George Schaefer lured him back into harness with a surprising offer to play the maverick Dr. Thomas Stockmann in his film version of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*, at substantially less than McQueen's going rate. He calls it "a labor of love," explaining that "I think I've been somewhat of a coward as an actor. I've never wanted to tackle anything I could fail at," in contrast to his early days in pictures when he says he was "tormented... driven. I wanted to be someone."

On the *Enemy* set, long-haired, bearded, weighing in at over 200 pounds, he kept his distance from co-stars Bibi Anderson, Charles Durning, and Michael Dysart. The excess weight looks uncomfortable on him, as he is not a tall man (studio biographies always insisted he was 5'11", *Time* reported 5'10", but this writer, who is an even 6' and has had occasion to compare

himself with McQueen, would guess 5'9"). It is especially disturbing on one who used to work out so regularly with barbells, weight pulley and punching bags "because," as he said, "in most pictures actors have to take their shirts off, or even strip down to shorts."

An Enemy of the People has been sneak-previewing, primarily for college audiences, and McQueen expresses delight with the response. The distributors, however, don't seem to know what to do with it. Meanwhile, his own company, Solar Productions, has moved onto the Burbank Studios lot to start preproduction on *I, Tom Horn*, a property Robert Redford also had his eye on. It is the true story of a controversial killer in frontier history who insisted he was framed for the murder of a young boy. McQueen did extensive research on his own for the film, the screenplay for which is based on Will Henry's book as well as an autobiography. Actual shooting, to the star's great pleasure, will be on remote locations in the Northwest. Don Siegel, with whom he has not worked in 15 years (*Hell is for Heroes*), will direct.

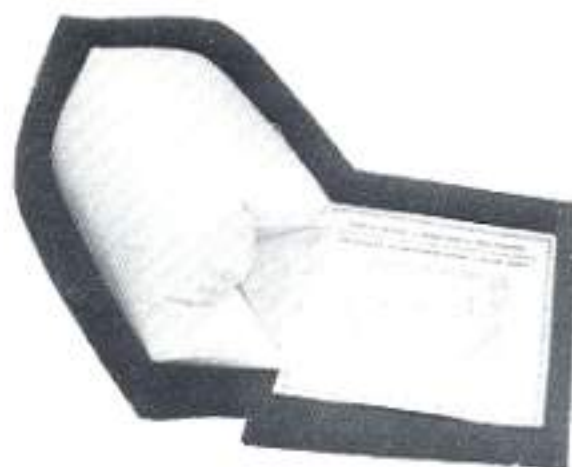
Unburdened of Reynolds' vanity, Eastwood's ego, Newman's pomposity, or even Redford's acne, Steve McQueen's private life remains exactly that. This writer learned that the middle-aged actor is deaf in his left ear and also has some hearing loss in his right, due to the fact that "I had mastoid trouble when I was a kid." Gossips report that "he sleeps in a large bed. The sheets must be white. The windows must be open. He usually sleeps in pajamas. Sometimes he sleeps in his shorts." Not very lip-smacking intimacies about someone who has been in the glare of the spotlight for nearly a quarter of a century!

Which is precisely the way the redoubtable Steve McQueen wants it. He is not a Newman, a Redford, nor even a Hoffman. "I am not a politician," he declares. "I don't know anything about politics. I just know about motorcycles." By no earthly reckoning a *mot*-maker, when pinned down as to his views on "human rights," the furthest he will commit himself is to say, "I love this country and I believe in it, but I don't believe the federal government has the right to tell any American citizen what to do unless they or their elected representatives have the right to vote on it."

To which his many gay fans would breathe a fervent "Amen!"

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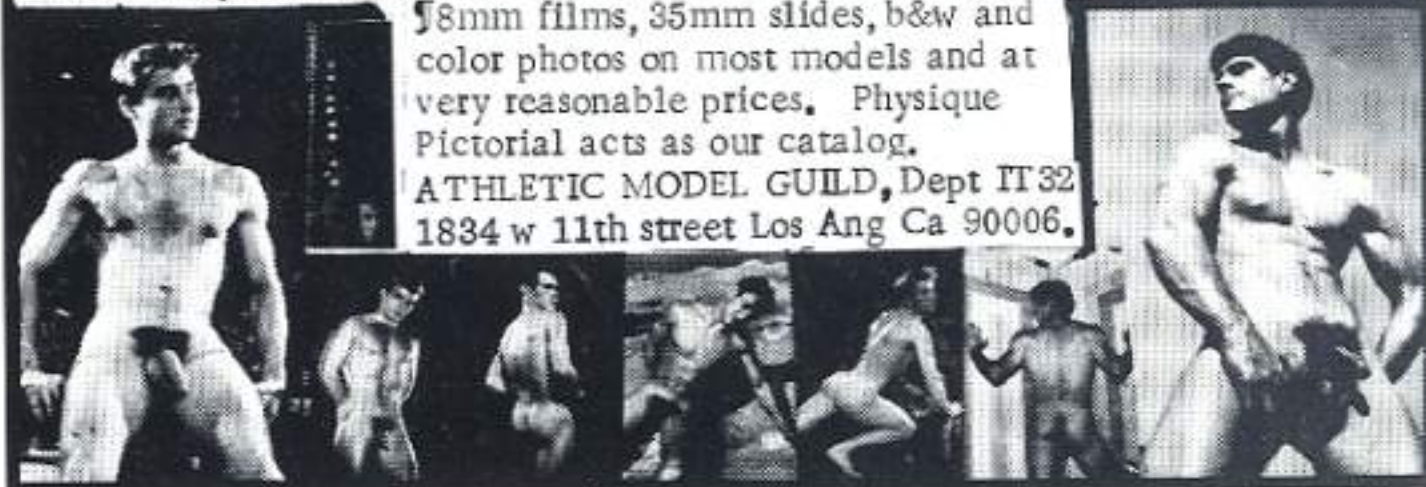
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NEW ORLEANS

(continued from page 35)

about in heat and peace for half an hour, and you'll see enough of dead New Orleanians. A trip to a dim, cool bar for a rum drink is a salutary activity after your visit with the dead.

If you're as dedicated as I think you are in your touring, you'll eventually want to get away from the French quarter. You will probably need a car to do this properly (although many people swear by the trolley cars in New Orleans, and you may want to travel thusly). Once you're out of the quarter and the downtown sector, head for the garden district, where the antebellum homes are a delight. You might want to go to Lake Pontchartrain while you're out and about, rent a boat to traverse the intercoastal waterway connecting the lake with the gulf and the river. There is splendid fishing and boating on the gulf if these be your inclinations. Now back to the city, the French quarter; it's getting close to nightfall and you'll want to rest a bit before you venture forth to the boites and discos.

Now to the business at hand. Whatever you taste in nightclubs, bars, you'll be able to indulge it in the quarter... from *The Page* (728 St. Louis St.) for drag queens and their aficionados to *The Bourbon Pub* (Bourbon and St. Anne), where the music is disco and the men are hot. Walk around. Take a peek at any number of bars on offer. You needn't limit yourself to

those clubs which usually appeal to you back home. You might find your way to the Greek bars on what the natives call "Decatur Drive." It helps if you're slumming when you hit these places, for they're often rough and rambunctious and not necessarily gay. Sailors frequent them and one or two courageous, possibly foolhardy, gays have been known to have been spirited out of one of the Decatur Drive bars and smuggled aboard a ship anchored on the river, where they have been passed somewhat deliriously, albeit willingly, from bunk to hammock to bunk again by horny seamen.

Where ever you end up, reserve the wee hours for Lafite's in Exile. It's been described as the mother bar of all gay bars (it celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in October, 1977). Lafite's is not a sleek, glossy club; it's smoke filled, faintly rundown and often crowded, and it has its complement of obnoxious drunks and queens in their cups. But it has Billie Holiday on its jukebox, an open hearth along one wall to take the chill off the night air, drinks served in buckets (New Orleanese for squat, fat glasses), lots of cruising and dark corners (if that be your desire), and a reputation for anything goes.

On Mardi Gras day Lafite's is incredible. On Fat Tuesday anything may happen. The police have been known to gently urge the participants of a circle jerk back inside Lafite's whence they have come out

onto Bourbon Street to see who can get his load off the fastest.

At other times of the year, Lafite's quiets down a bit, but there is always an outrage of one sort or another just concluded or about to begin. It is all generally harmless, though undoubtedly fatiguing. Tale has it that Lafite's closes only four hours out of the year — on Christmas morning, when the place is hosed out and bleached down. I trust this brief, rather debauched scenario has not put you off. If you relax a bit, you should find something or someone to enjoy in Lafite's in Exile.

Should you tire of Lafite's before dawn, why not return to the river and the Moonwalk to watch the sun rise? Make your way through Jackson Square to the Moonwalk. Sit on a bench and just watch the river flow, hear it lapping, warm yourself against a friend to keep off the early morning chill. Once the sun is well up, have beignets and chicory coffee at Cafe du Monde and then visit the adjacent French Market (both quite near the Moonwalk). Don't forget to take a look at the streetcar named Desire enshrined near the market — we all owe Mr. Williams and dear Blanche du Bois our homage. Exhausted, but exhilarated, you are ready to bed down with that man you should have found as you wandered through the French quarter.

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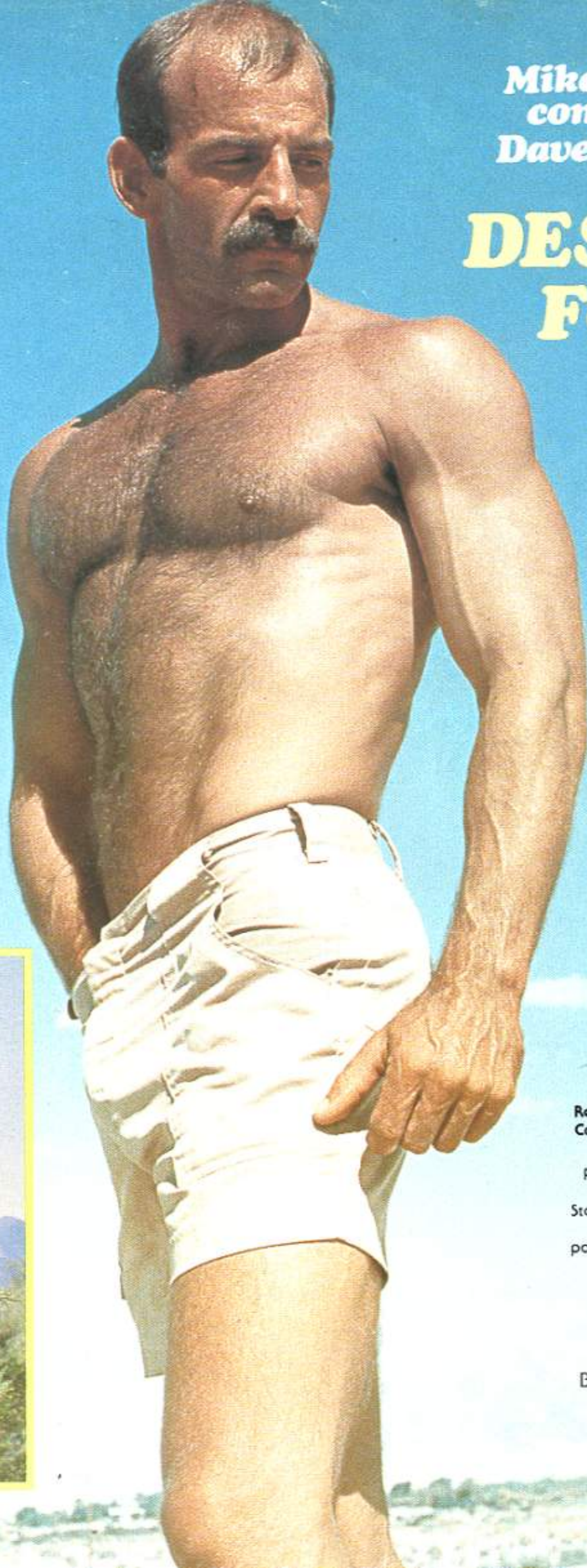
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